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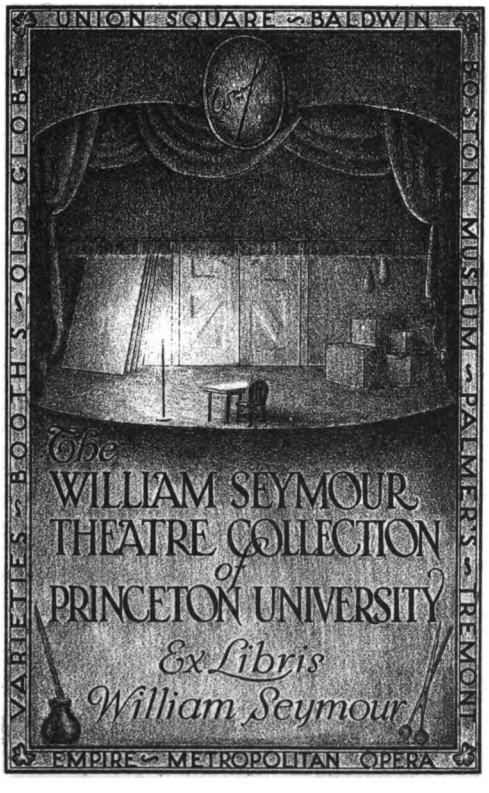


The story of Nell Gwyn

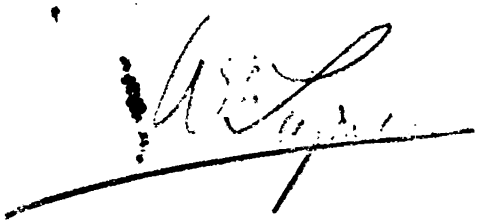
Peter Cunningham, Gordon Goodwin

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Samuel Pepys.

After the Portrait by Sir G. Kneller.

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THE STORY
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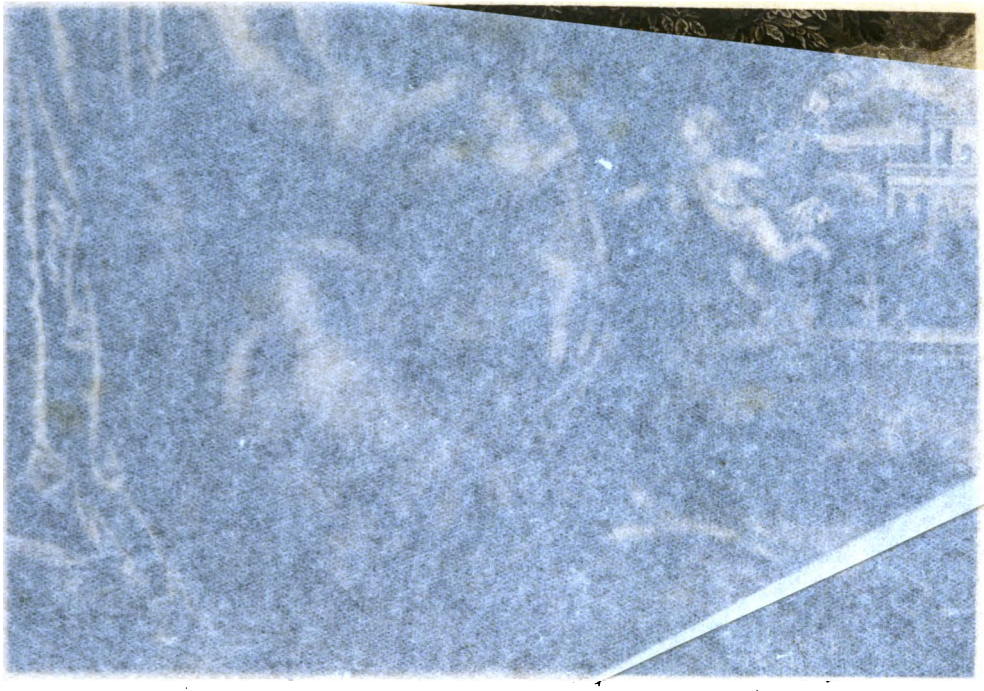
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Madame Ellen Groinn and her troo Sons. Charles
Earl of Beaufort and James LORD Beauclaire

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THE STORY

OF

NELL GWYN

By PETER CUNNINGHAM

EDITED BY GORDON GOODWIN

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

Edinburgh

JOHN GRANT

1908

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PREFATORY NOTE

PETER CUNNINGHAM'S *Story of Nell Gwyn* first appeared as a serial in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1851 and was reissued in volume form in the following year. A new edition, with the author's last corrections and some additional notes, was published in 1892. Mr. H. B. Wheatley was the editor, and to his admirable introduction and annotations we are indebted. Our best thanks are also due to Mr. H. Lavers-Smith for having communicated to us several valuable notes and suggestions. In the present edition some obvious misprints have been corrected in the text, while new matter has been added to the author's footnotes between brackets. Other notes and illustrations will be found at the end of the book. Two appendices which concern Hamilton's *Memoirs of Count Grammont* only have been omitted.

It has been confidently asserted that Cunningham did not adhere to the strict text of the more inaccessible documents cited by him; at present we can only say that his volume of *Extracts from the Accounts of the Revels at Court*, in the publications of the old Shakespeare Society, has to be used with extreme caution.

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[1] Compare with this the portrait by Lely of Mary Davis (in the National Portrait Gallery), reproduced in *Memoirs of Count Grammont* (Bullen, 1903), II. 152. The miniature and the N.P.G. picture are portraits of the same lady.

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THE
STORY OF NELL GWYN

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Introduction—Birth and Birthplace—Horoscope of her nativity—Condition in life of her father—Her account of her early days—Becomes an orange-girl at the theatre—Effects of the Restoration—Revival of the stage—Two theatres allowed—Scenery and dresses—Principal actors and actresses—Duties and importance of the orange-girls.

DR. THOMAS TENISON, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, preached the funeral sermon of Nell Gwyn. What so good a man did not think an unfit subject for a sermon, will not be thought, I trust, an unfit subject for a book; for the life that was spent remissly may yet convey a moral, like that of Jane Shore, which the wise and virtuous Sir Thomas More has told so touchingly in his *History of King Richard III.*

The English people have always entertained a peculiar liking for Nell Gwyn. There is a sort of indulgence towards her not generally conceded to any other woman of her class. Thousands are attracted by her name, they know not why, and do not stay to inquire. It is the popular impression that, with all her failings, she had a generous as

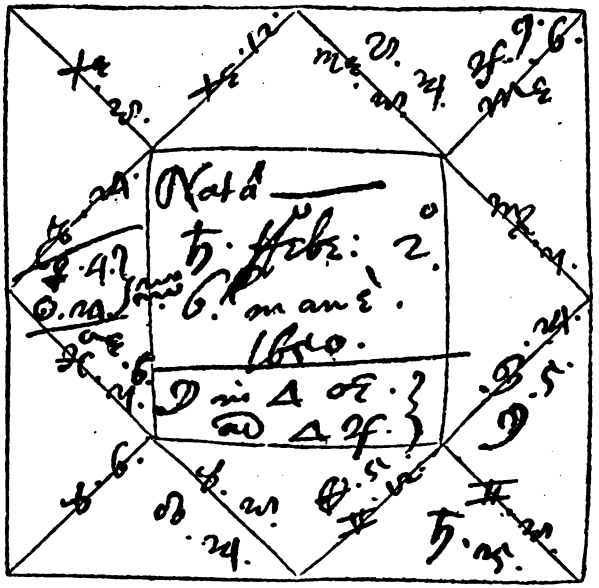
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well as a tender heart; that when raised from poverty, she reserved her wealth for others rather than herself; and that the influence she possessed was often exercised for good objects, and never abused. Contrasted with others in a far superior rank in life, and tried by fewer temptations, there is much that marks and removes her from the common herd. The many have no sympathy, nor should they have any, for Barbara Palmer, Louise de Quérouaille, or Erengard de Schulenberg; but for Nell Gwyn, "pretty witty Nell," there is a tolerant and kindly regard, which the following pages are designed to illustrate rather than extend.

The Coal Yard in Drury Lane, a low alley, the last on the east or City side of the lane, and still known by that name, was, it is said, the place of Nell Gwyn's birth. They show, however, in Pipe Lane, in the parish of St. John, in the city of Hereford, a small house of brick and timber, now little better than an hovel, in which, according to local tradition, she was born. That the Coal Yard was the place of her birth was stated in print as early as 1721; and this was copied by Oldys, a curious inquirer into literary and dramatic matters, in the account of her life which he wrote for Curll.[1] The Hereford story, too, is of some standing; but there is little else, I am afraid, to support it. The capital of the cider country, however, does not want even Nell Gwyn to add to its theatrical reputation; in the same cathedral city which claims to be the birthplace of the best-known English actress, was

[1] Curll's *History of the English Stage*, 8vo, 1741, p. 111.

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HOROSCOPE OF NELL GWYN.

From Ashmolean MS.

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born, seventy years later, David Garrick, the greatest and best-known actor we have yet had.[1]

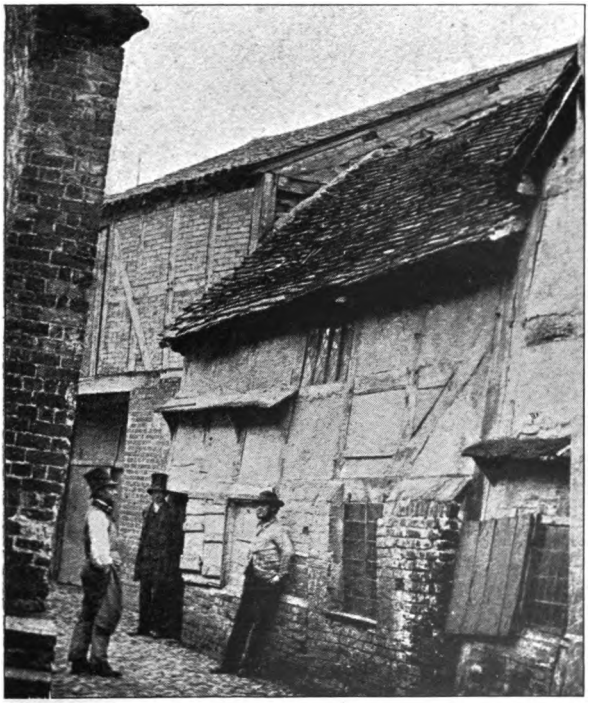
The horoscope of the nativity of Eleanor Gwyn, the work perhaps of Lilly, is still to be seen amongst Ashmole's papers in the museum at Oxford. She was born, it states, on the 2nd of February 1650. The horoscope, of which I have had a facsimile made, shows what stars were supposed to be in the ascendant at the time; and such of my readers as do not disdain a study which engaged the attention and ruled not unfrequently the actions of vigorous-minded men like Lord Chancellor Shaftesbury and the poet Dryden, may find more meaning in the state of the heavenly bodies at her birth than I have as yet succeeded in detecting.

Of the early history of Nell, and of the rank in life of her parents, very little is known with certainty. Her father, it is said, was Captain Thomas Gwyn, of an ancient family in Wales.[2] The name certainly is of Welsh extraction, and the descent may be admitted without adopting the captaincy; for by other hitherto received accounts her father

[1] "When I went first to Oxford, Dr. John Ireland, an antiquary, assured me that Nelly was born in Oxford. He named the parish, but I have forgot it. It is certain that two of her son's titles—Headington and Barford—were taken from Oxfordshire localities."—MS. note by the late Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, the antiquary and genealogist. Oddly enough, one of Nelly's grandsons died Bishop of Hereford. [James Beauclerk, bishop from 1746 to 1787.]

[2] MS. note by Van Bossen, made in 1688, and quoted at length in a subsequent page (chapter vii.). [Nelly had her coat of arms, and very imposing it is. (See *Addit. MS.*, 26,683, f. 59*b*, in British Museum.)]

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Reputed birthplace of Nell Gwyn at Hereford. *From a photograph taken in* 1858.

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was a fruiterer in Covent Garden. She speaks in her will of her "kinsman Cholmley," and the satires of the time have pilloried a cousin, raised by her influence to an ensigncy from the menial office of one of the black guard employed in carrying coals at Court. Her mother, who lived to see her daughter a favourite of the King, and the mother by him of at least two children, was accidentally drowned in a pond near the Neat Houses at Chelsea. Her Christian name was Eleanor, but her maiden name is unknown.

Whatever the station in life to which her pedigree might have entitled her, her bringing up, by her own account, was humble enough. "Mrs. Pierce tells me," said Pepys, "that the two Marshalls at the King's House are Stephen Marshall's, the great Presbyterian's daughters; and that Nelly and Beck Marshall falling out the other day, the latter called the other my Lord Buckhurst's mistress. Nell answered her, 'I was but one man's mistress, though I was brought up in a brothel to fill strong water[1] to the gentlemen; and you are a mistress to three or four, though a Presbyter's praying daughter.'" This, for a girl of any virtue or beauty, was indeed a bad bringing-up.

The Coal Yard, infamous in later years as one of the residences of Jonathan Wild, was the next turning in the same street to the still more notorious and fashionably inhabited Lewknor Lane, where young creatures were inveigled to

[1] Among Mr. Akerman's *Tradesmen's Tokens current in London*, 1648 *to* 1672, is that of "a strong water man."

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infamy, and sent dressed as orange-girls to sell fruit and attract attention in the adjoining theatres.

That this was Nelly's next calling we have the testimony of the Duchess of Portsmouth and the authority of a poem of the time, attributed to Lord Rochester:

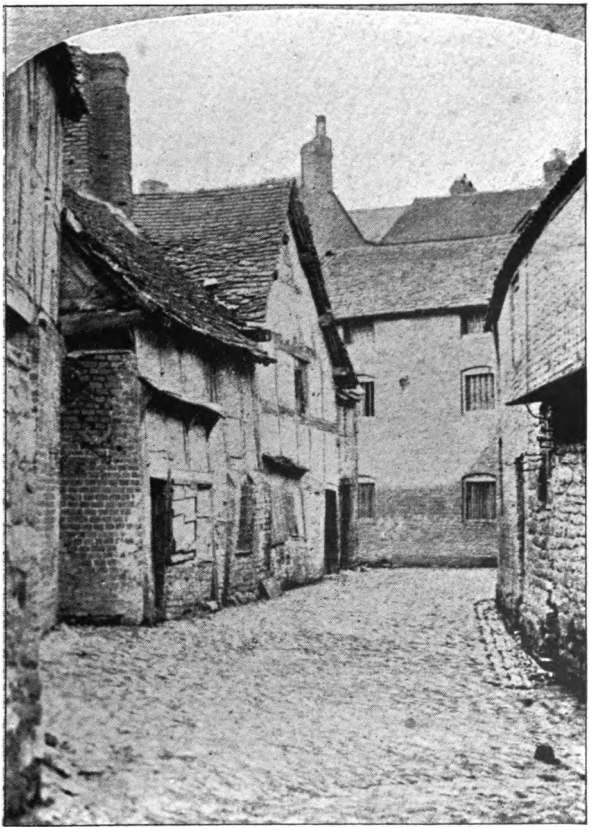
> But first the basket her fair arm did suit,
> Laden with pippins and Hesperian fruit;
> This first step raised, to the wondering pit she sold
> The lovely fruit smiling with streaks of gold.

Nell was now an orange-girl, holding her basket of fruit covered with vine-leaves in the pit of the King's Theatre, and taking her stand with her fellow fruit-women in the front row of the pit, with her back to the stage.[1] The cry of the fruit-women, which Shadwell has preserved, "Oranges! will you have any oranges?"[2] must have come clear and invitingly from the lips of Nell Gwyn.

She was ten years of age at the Restoration of King Charles II., in 1660. She was old enough, therefore, to have noticed the extraordinary change which the return of royalty effected in the manners, customs, feelings, and even conversation of the bulk of the people. The strict observance of the Sabbath was no longer rigidly enforced. Sir Charles Sedley and the Duke of Buckingham rode in their coaches on a Sunday, and the barber and the shoeblack shaved beards and cleaned boots on the same day, without the overseers of the poor of the parish inflicting fines on them for such

[1] T. Shadwell's *Works*, iii. 173.
[2] Davies's *Dramatic Miscellanies*, iii. 464.

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Another view of the Hereford house.

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(as they were then thought) unseemly breaches of the Sabbath. Maypoles were once more erected on spots endeared by old associations, and the people again danced their old dances around them. The Cavalier restored the royal insignia on his fireplace to its old position; the King's Head, the Duke's Head, and the Crown were once more favourite signs by which taverns were distinguished; drinking of healths and deep potations, with all their Low-Country honours and observances, were again in vogue. Oughtred, the mathematician, died of joy, and Urquhart, the translator of Rabelais, of laughter, at hearing of the enthusiasm of the English to "welcome home old Rowley."[1] The King's health—

Here's a health unto his Majesty, with a fa, la, la—

was made a pretext for the worst excesses, and irreligion and indecency were thought to secure conversation against a suspicion of disloyalty and fanaticism. Even the common people took to gay-coloured dresses as before; and a freedom of spirits, rendered familiar by early recollection, and only half subdued by Presbyterian persecution, was confirmed by a licence of tongue which the young men about court had acquired while in exile with their sovereign.

Not the least striking effect of the Restoration of the King was the revival of the English theatres. They had been closed and the players silenced for

[1] "Welcome home, old Rowley," is the name of the well-known Scottish tune called "Haud awa' frae me, Donald." See Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum*, iv. 318.

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three-and-twenty years, and in that space a new generation had arisen, to whom the entertainments of the stage were known but by name. The theatres were now re-opened, and with every advantage which stage properties, new and improved scenery, and the costliest dresses could lend to help them forward. But there were other advantages equally new, and of still greater importance, but for which the name of Eleanor Gwyn would in all likelihood never have reached us.

From the earliest epoch of the stage in England till the theatres were silenced at the outbreak of the Civil War, female characters had invariably been played by men, and during the same brilliant period of our dramatic history there is but one instance of a sovereign witnessing a performance at a public theatre. Henrietta Maria, though so great a favourer of theatrical exhibitions, was present once, and once only, at the theatre in the Blackfriars. The plays of Shakespeare and Ben Jonson,

> Which so did take Eliza and our James,

were invariably seen by those sovereigns, as afterwards by Charles I., in the halls, banqueting-houses, and cockpits attached to their palaces. With the Restoration,

> When Love was all an easy Monarch's care,
> Seldom at council, never in a war,

came women on the stage, and the King and Queen, the Dukes of York and Buckingham, the chief courtiers, and the maids-of-honour, were among the constant frequenters of the public theatres.

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Great interest was used at the Restoration for the erection of new theatres in London, but the King, acting it is thought on the advice of Clarendon, who wished to stem at all points the flood of idle gaiety and dissipation, would not allow of more than two—the King's Theatre, under the control of Thomas Killigrew, and the Duke's Theatre (so called in compliment to his brother, the Duke of York), under the direction of Sir William Davenant. Better men for the purpose could not have been chosen. Killigrew was one of the Grooms of the Bedchamber to the King, a well-known wit at court and a dramatist himself; and Davenant, who filled the office of Poet Laureate in the household of the King, as he had done before to his father, King Charles I., had been a successful writer for the stage, while Ben Jonson and Massinger were still alive. The royal brothers patronised both houses with equal earnestness, and the patentees vied with each other in catering successfully for the public amusement.

The King's Theatre, or "The Theatre," as it was commonly called, stood in Drury Lane, on the site of the present building, and was the first theatre, as the present is the fourth, erected on the site. It was small, with few pretensions to architectural beauty, and was first opened on the 8th of April 1663, when Nell was a girl of thirteen. The chief entrance was in Little Russell Street, not as now in Brydges Street. The stage was lighted with wax candles, on brass censers or cressets. The pit lay open to the weather for the sake of light,

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but was subsequently covered in with a glazed cupola, which, however, only imperfectly protected the audience, so that in stormy weather the house was thrown into disorder, and the people in the pit were fain to rise.

The Duke's Theatre, commonly called "The Opera," from the nature of its performances, stood at the back of what is now the Royal College of Surgeons, in Portugal Row, on the south side of Lincoln's Inn Fields. It was originally a tennis-court, and, like its rival, was run up hurriedly to meet the wants of the age. The interior arrangements and accommodation were much the same as at Killigrew's house.

The company at the King's Theatre included among the actors, at the first opening of the house, Theophilus Bird, Charles Hart, Michael Mohun, John Lacy, Nicholas Burt, William Cartwright, William Wintershall, Walter Clun, Robert Shatterell, and Edward Kynaston; and Mrs. Corey, Mrs. Ann Marshall, Mrs. Rebecca Marshall, Mrs. Eastland, Mrs. Weaver, Mrs. Uphill, Mrs. Knep, and Mrs. Hughes were among the female performers. Joe Haines, the low comedian, and Cardell Goodman, the lover of the Duchess of Cleveland, were subsequent accessions to the troop; and so also were Mrs. Boutell and "Mrs. Ellen Gwyn."

Bird belonged to the former race of actors, and did not long survive the Restoration. Hart and Clun had been bred up as boys at the Blackfriars to act women's parts. Hart, who had served as a

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captain in the King's army, rose to the summit of his profession, but Clun was unfortunately killed while his reputation was still on the increase. Mohun had played at the Cockpit before the Civil Wars, and had served as a captain under the King, and afterwards in the same capacity in Flanders, where he received the pay of a major; he was famous in Iago and Cassius. Lacy, a native of Yorkshire, was the Irish Johnstone and Tyrone Power of his time. Burt, who had been a boy first under Shank at the Blackfriars, and then under Beeston at the Cockpit, was famous before the Civil Wars for the part of Clariana in Shirley's play of *Love's Cruelty*, and after the Restoration equally famous as Othello. Cartwright and Wintershall had belonged to the private house in Salisbury Court. Cartwright won great renown in Falstaff, and as one of the two kings of Brentford in the farce of the *Rehearsal*. Wintershall played Master Slender, for which Dennis the critic commends him highly, and was celebrated for his Cokes in Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*. Shatterell had been quartermaster in Sir Robert Dallison's regiment of horse,—the same in which Hart had been a lieutenant and Burt a cornet. Kynaston acquired especial favour in female parts, for which, indeed, he continued celebrated long after the introduction of women on the stage. Such were the actors at the King's House when Nell Gwyn joined the company.

Mrs. Corey (the name Miss had then an improper meaning, and the women though single were called

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Mistresses)[1] played Abigail, in the *Scornful Lady* of Beaumont and Fletcher; Sempronia, in Jonson's *Catiline;* and was the original Widow Blackacre in Wycherley's *Plain Dealer;*—Pepys calls her Doll Common. The two Marshalls, Ann and Rebecca (to whom I have already had occasion to refer), were the younger daughters of the well-known Stephen Marshall, the Presbyterian divine, who preached the sermon at the funeral of John Pym. Mrs. Uphill was first the mistress and then the wife of Sir Robert Howard, the poet. Mrs. Knep was the wife of a Smithfield horsedealer, and the mistress of Pepys. Mrs. Hughes, better known as Peg, was the mistress of Prince Rupert, by whom she had a daughter; and Mrs. Boutell was famous for playing Statira to Mrs. Barry's Roxana, in Lee's impressive tragedy of *Alexander the Great.* Such were the actresses when Nell came among them.

Among the actors at the Duke's were Thomas Betterton, the rival of Burbage and Garrick in the

[1] The first unmarried actress who had Miss before her name on a playbill was Miss Cross, the original Miss Hoyden in Vanbrugh's *Relapse* [which was given at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, on Boxing-day 1697]. [In *Epigrams of All Sorts made at Divers Times*, by Richard Flecknoe, London, 1670, p. 43, is an epigram to Mrs. Davis (the famous "Moll") on her excellent dancing, which begins:

> "Dear Mis, delight of all the nobler sort,
> Pride of the stage, and darling of the Court,"

and "furnishes," says Mr. Joseph Knight, art. Davis or Davies (Mary) in *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, an exceptionally early instance of an unmarried woman being addressed, with no uncomplimentary intention, as Miss." Still, in this case, "Miss" may have come in (like Saint Peter) for the sake of the metre.]

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well-earned greatness of his reputation, and the last survivor of the old school of actors; Joseph Harris, the friend of Pepys, originally a seal-cutter, and famous for acting Romeo, Wolsey, and Sir Andrew Aguecheek; William Smith, a barrister of Gray's Inn, celebrated as Zanga in Lord Orrery's *Mustapha;* Samuel Sandford, called by King Charles II. the best representative of a villain in the world, and praised both by Langbaine and Steele for his excellence in his art; James Nokes, originally a toyman in Cornhill, famous for playing Sir Nicholas Cully in Etherege's *Love in a Tub*, for his bawling fops,[1] and for his "good company"; Cave Underhill, clever as Cutter in Cowley's comedy, and as the grave-digger in *Hamlet*, called by Steele "honest Cave Underhill"; and Matthew Medbourne, a useful actor in parts not requiring any great excellence. The women were, Elizabeth Davenport, the first Roxolana in the *Siege of Rhodes*, snatched from the stage to become the mistress of the twentieth and last Earl of Oxford of the noble family of Vere; Mary Saunderson, famous as Queen Katherine and Juliet, afterwards the wife of the great Betterton; Mary or Moll Davis, excellent in singing and dancing,—afterwards the mistress of Charles II.; Mrs. Long, the mistress of the Duke of Richmond,[2] celebrated for

[1] In *Tunbridge Wells a Satyr* Rochester, after alluding to the Cully part, writes: "A Bawling Fop, a Natural Nokes." *Works*, ed. 1709, p. 58.—G. G.

[2] MS. note by Isaac Reed, in his copy of Downes's *Roscius Anglicanus.*

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the elegance of her appearance in men's clothes; Mrs. Norris, the mother of Jubilee Dicky; Mrs. Holden, daughter of a bookseller to whom Betterton had been bound apprentice; and Mrs. Jennings and Mrs. Johnson, both taken from the stage by gallants of the town,—the former but little known as an actress, the latter celebrated as a dancer and for her Carolina in Shadwell's comedy of *Epsom Wells*.

Such were the performers at the Duke's House. Anthony Leigh and Mrs. Barry, both brought out at the same theatre, were accessions after Davenant's death, and, as I see reason to believe, after Nell Gwyn had ceased to be connected with the stage.

The dresses at both houses were magnificent and costly, but little or no attention was paid to costume. The King, the Queen, the Duke, and several of the richer nobility, gave their coronation suits to the actors, and on extraordinary occasions a play was equipped at the expense of the King. Old court dresses were contributed by the gentry, and birth-day suits continued to be presented as late as the reign of George II. The scenery at the Duke's House was superior to the King's, for Davenant, who introduced the opera among us, introduced us at the same time to local and expensive scenery. Battles were no longer represented

> With four or five most vile and ragged foils,

or coronations by a crown taken from a deal table by a single attendant.

The old stock plays were divided by the two

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companies. Killigrew had *Othello*, *Julius Cæsar*, *Henry the Fourth*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *A Midsummer-Night's Dream;* four of Ben Jonson's plays—*The Alchemist*, *The Fox*, *The Silent Woman*, and *Catiline;* and the best of Beaumont and Fletcher's—*A King and no King*, *The Humorous Lieutenant*, *Rule a Wife and have a Wife*, *The Maid's Tragedy*, *Rollo*, *The Elder Brother*, *Philaster*, and *The Scornful Lady;* with Massinger's *Virgin Martyr*, and Shirley's *Traitor*. Davenant played *Hamlet*, *Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Henry the Eighth*, *Twelfth Night*, and *The Tempest;* Webster's *Duchess of Malfi* and *Mad Lover;* Middleton's *Young Changeling;*[1] Fletcher's *Loya*, *Subject* and *Mad Lover;* and Massinger's *Bondman*.

The new plays at the King's House were contributed by Sir Robert Howard, Sir Charles Sedley, Major Porter, Killigrew himself, Dryden, and Nat Lee; at the Duke's House by Davenant, Cowley, Etherege, Lord Orrery, and others. The new tragedies were principally in rhyme. At the first performance of a new comedy ladies seldom attended, or, if at all, in masks—such was the studied indecency of the art of that period.

> The wits of Charles found easier ways to fame,
> Nor wished for Jonson's art or Shakespeare's flame;
> Themselves they studied—as they felt they writ—
> Intrigue was plot, obscenity was wit.

[1] *The Changeling*, by Thomas Middleton and William Rowley, first played January 4, 1623, was printed in 1653 and reissued with the title given in the text in 1668. The play was revived with great success at the Restoration, when it was witnessed by Pepys (February 23, 1661).—G. G.

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The performances commenced at three.[1] It was usual, therefore, to dine beforehand, and when the play was over to adjourn to the Mulberry Garden, to Vauxhall, or some other place of public entertainment—

> Thither run,
> Some to undo, and some to be undone.

The prices of admission were, boxes four shillings, pit two-and-sixpence, middle gallery eighteenpence, upper gallery one shilling. The ladies in the pit wore vizards or masks. The middle gallery was long the favourite resort of Mr. and Mrs. Pepys.

The upper gallery, as at present, was attended by the poorest and the noisiest. Servants in livery were admitted as soon as the fifth act commenced.

With the orange-girls (who stood, as we have seen, in the pit, with their back to the stage) the beaux about town were accustomed to break their jests ;[2] and that the language employed was not of the most delicate description, we may gather from the dialogue of Dorimant, in Etherege's comedy of *Sir Fopling Flutter*.

[1] Plays began at one in Shakespeare's time, at three in Dryden's, at four in Congreve's. In 1696 the hour was four. [Cunningham follows Malone (*Shakespeare by Boswell*), but the more recent researches of Payne Collier (*Engl. Dramat. Poetry*, ed. 1879, iii. 180) and Robert W. Lowe (*Thomas Betterton*, p. 15) show that the time varied with the season of the year. Three o'clock was the hour according to *Histriomastix* (1610) and Thomas Cranley's *Amanda* (1635), and half-past three the time named in the prologue to Dryden's *Wild Gallant*, 1663.]

[2] Prologue to Lord Rochester's *Valentinian;* T. Shadwell's *Works*, i. 199.

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The mistress or superior of the girls was familiarly known as Orange Moll, and filled the same sort of office in the theatre that the mother of the maids occupied at court among the maids-of-honour. Both Sir William Penn and Pepys would occasionally have "a great deal of discourse" with Orange Moll; and Mrs. Knep, the actress, when in want of Pepys, sent Moll to the Clerk of the Acts with the welcome message. To higgle about the price of the fruit was thought beneath the character of a gentleman. "The next step," says the *Young Gallant's Academy*, "is to give a turn to the China orange wench, and give her her own rate for her oranges (for 'tis below a gentleman to stand haggling like a citizen's wife), and then to present the fairest to the next vizard mask."[1] Pepys, when challenged in the pit for the price of twelve oranges which the orange-woman said he owed her, but which he says was wholly untrue, was not content with denying the debt, "but for quiet bought four shillings'-worth of oranges from her at sixpence a-piece."[2] This was a high price, but the Clerk of

[1] *The Young Gallant's Academy, or Directions how he should behave himself in all places and company.* By Sam. Overcome [or rather Vincent], 1674. [A republication of the *Guls Hornebook* of Thomas Dekker, 1609, with alterations adapted to the time.]

[2] "Half-crown my play, sixpence my orange cost."
Prologue to Mrs. Behn's *Young King*, 1698.
"Nor furiously laid orange-wench a-board
For asking what in fruit and love you'd scored.'
Butler, *A Panegyric on Sir John Denham.*
"When trading grows scant, they join all their forces

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the Acts was true to the direction in the *Gallant's Academy*.

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together, and make up one grand show and admit the cut-purse and ballad-singer to trade under them, as orange-women do at a playhouse."

Butler, *Character of a Jugler*.

"*Mr. Vain.*—I can't imagine how I first came to be of this humour, unless 'twere hearing the orange-wenches talk of ladies and their gallants. So I began to think I had no way of being in the fashion, but bragging of mistresses."

Hon. James Howard, *The English Monsieur*, p. 4, 4to, 1674.

"*Mrs. Crafty.*—This life of mine can last no longer than my beauty; and though 'tis pleasant now, I want nothing whilst I am Mr. Welbred's mistress,—yet, if his mind should change, I might e'en sell oranges for my living, and he not buy one of me to relieve me."

Hon. James Howard, *The English Monsieur*, p. 10.

"She outdoes a playhouse orange-woman for the politick management of a bawdy intrigue."

Tunbridge Wells, a Comedy, 4to, 1678.

"In former times, a play of humour, or with a good plot, could certainly please; but now a poet must find out a third way, and adapt his scenes and story to the genius of the critic, if he'd have it pass; he'll have nothing to do with your dull Spanish plot, for whilst he's rallying with the orange-wench, the business of the act gets quite out of his head, and then 'tis 'Damme, what stuff's this?' he sees neither head nor tail to't."

D'Urfey, Preface to *The Banditti*, 4to, 1686.

"The noble peer may to the play repair,
Court the pert damsel with her China-ware—
Nay, marry her—if he please—no one will care."

D'Urfey, Prologue to *A Fool's Preferment*, 4to, 1688.

"The orange-miss that here cajoles the Duke
May sell her rotten ware without rebuke."

D'Urfey, Prologue to *Don Quixote*, Part I, 4to, 1694.

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CHAPTER II.

Pepys introduces us to Nelly—Character of Pepys—Nelly at the Duke's Theatre—Who was Duncan?—Nell's parts as Lady Wealthy, Enanthe, and Florimel—Charles Hart—Nell's lodgings in Drury Lane—Description of Drury Lane in the reign of Charles II.—The Maypole in the Strand—Nell and Lord Buckhurst—Position in society of Actors and Actresses—Character of Lord Buckhurst—Nelly at Epsom.

OUR earliest introduction to Nell Gwyn we owe to Pepys. This precise and lively diarist (who makes us live in his own circle of amusements by the truth and quaintness of his descriptions) was a constant playgoer. To see and to be seen, when the work of his office was over, were the leading objects of his thoughts. Few novelties escaped him, for he never allowed his love of money to interfere with the gratification of his wishes. His situation, as Clerk of the Acts, in the Navy Office, while the Duke of York was Lord High Admiral, gave him a taste for the entertainments which his master enjoyed. He loved to be found wherever the King and his brother were. He was fond of music, could

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prick down a few notes for himself, and when his portrait was painted by Hales, was drawn holding in his hand the music which he had composed for a favourite passage in the *Siege of Rhodes*.[1] He was known to many of the players, and often asked them to dinner,—now and then not much to the satisfaction, as he tells us, of his wife. Mrs. Knep, of the King's House, and Joseph Harris of the Duke's (to both of whom I have already introduced the reader) were two of his especial favourites. The gossip and scandal of the green-room of Drury Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields were in this way known to him, and what he failed to obtain behind

[1] This hitherto unengraved portrait was bought by me at the sale, in 1848, of the pictures, etc., of the family of Pepys Cockerell. It was called by the auctioneer "portrait of a Musician," but is unquestionably the picture referred to by Pepys in the following passages of his Diary:—

"1666, March 17. With my wife out to Hales's, where I am still infinitely pleased with my wife's picture. I paid him £14 for the picture, and £1 5*s*. for the frame. . . . This day I began to sit, and he will make me, I think, a very fine picture. He promises it shall be as good as my wife's, and I sit to have it full of shadows, and do almost break my neck looking over my shoulder to make the posture for him to work by.

"March 30. To Hales's, and there sat till almost quite dark upon working my gowne, which I hired to be drawn in; an Indian gowne.

"April 11. To Hales's, where there was nothing found to be done more to my picture, but the musique, which now pleases me mightily, it being painted true."

See also *The Athenæum* for 1848. Lord Braybrooke (Pepys, iii. p. 178) doubts the likeness, but admits that the portrait answers the description. [Pepys further informs us (April 13) that the landscape was "put out." The portrait was bought for the National Portrait Gallery in February 1866; a good reproduction of it is given in Mr. Wheatley's edition of Pepys's *Diary*.]

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the scenes he would learn from the orange-women at both houses.

Nell was in her sixteenth, and Mr. Pepys in his thirty-fourth year, when, on Monday the 3rd of April 1665, they would appear to have seen one another for the first time. They met at the Duke's Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields during the performance of *Mustapha*, a tragedy, by the Earl of Orrery, in which Betterton played the part of Solyman, Harris that of Mustapha, and Mrs. or Miss Davis that of the Queen of Hungaria. Great care had been taken to produce this now long-forgotten tragedy with the utmost magnificence. All the parts were newly clothed, and new scenes had been painted expressly for it. Yet we are told by Pepys that "all the pleasure of the play" was in the circumstance that the King and my Lady Castlemaine were there, and that he *sat next* to "pretty witty Nell at the King's House" and to the younger Marshall, another actress at the same theatre—a circumstance, he adds, with his usual quaint honesty of remark, "which pleased me mightily." Yet the play was a good one in Pepys's eyes. Nine months later he calls it "a most excellent play"; and when he saw it again, after an interval of more than two years, he describes it as one he liked better the more he saw it:—"a most admirable poem, and bravely acted."[1] His after entries, therefore, more than confirm the truth of his earlier impressions. The real pleasure of the

[1] Pepys, Sept. 4, 1667.

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play, however, was that he sat by the side of "pretty witty Nell," whose foot has been described as the least of any woman's in England,[1] and by Rebecca Marshall, whose handsome hand he has carefully noted in another entry in his Diary. The small feet peeping occasionally from beneath a petticoat, and the handsome hands raised now and then to check a vagrant curl, must have held the Clerk of the Acts in a continual state of torture.

There was a novelty that night which had doubtless drawn Nell and old Stephen Marshall's younger daughter to the pit of Lincoln's Inn Fields. Mrs. Betterton was playing Roxolana in place of the elder Davenport, and Moll Davis had begun to attract the notice of some of the courtiers, and, as it was whispered, of the King himself. The old Roxolana had become the mistress of the twentieth and last earl of the great race of Vere; and Nell, while she reflected on what she may have thought to have been the good fortune of her fellow-actress, might have had her envy appeased could she have foreseen that she should give birth to a son (the mother an orange-girl, the father the King of England) destined to obtain a dukedom in her own lifetime, and afterwards to marry the heiress of the very earl who had taken the old Roxolana from a rival stage—first to deceive and afterwards to desert her.

Nell was indebted, there is reason to believe, for her introduction to the stage, or at least to another

[1] Oldys, in Curll's *History of the Stage*, p. 111.

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condition in life, to a person whose name is variously written as Duncan and as Dungan. Oldys, who calls him Duncan, had heard that he was a merchant, and that he had taken a fancy to her from her smart wit, fine shape, and the smallness of her feet. The information of Oldys is confirmed by the satire of Etherege, who adds, much to the credit of Nelly, that she remembered in after years the friend of her youth, and that to her interest it was he owed his appointment in the Guards. To sift and exhibit the equal mixture of truth and error in these accounts would not repay the reader for the trouble I should occasion him. I have sifted them myself, and see reason to believe that Oldys was wrong in calling him a merchant; while I suspect that the Duncan commemorated by Etherege, in his satire upon Nelly, was the Dongan described by De Grammont as a gentleman of merit who succeeded Duras, afterwards Earl of Feversham, in the post of Lieutenant in the Duke's Life Guards. That there was a lieutenant of this name in the Duke's Life Guards I have ascertained from official documents. He was a cadet of the house of Limerick, and his Christian name was Robert. If there is truth in De Grammont's account, he died in or before 1669. A Colonel Dungan was Governor of New York in the reign of James II.[1]

[1] *Secret Service Expenses of Charles II. and James II.*, p. 195. There is in one of Etherege's MS. satires a very coarse allusion to Dungan and Nelly. [The lines occur in Etherege's satire called *Madam Nelly's Complaint*, printed in *Miscellaneous Works written by George, late Duke of Buckingham*, edits. 1704 and 1715.]

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Such, then, is all that can be ascertained, after full inquiry, of this Duncan or Dungan, by whom Nelly is said to have been lifted from her very humble condition in life. Such, indeed, is the whole of the information I have been able to obtain about "pretty witty Nell" from her birth to the winter of 1666, when we again hear of her through the indefatigable Pepys. How her life was passed during the fearful Plague season of 1665, or where she was during the Great Fire of London in the following year, it is now useless to conjecture. The transition from the orange-girl to the actress may easily be imagined without the intervention of any Mr. Dungan. The pert vivacity and ready wit she exhibited in later life must have received early encouragement and cultivation from the warmth of language the men of sort and quality employed in speaking to all classes of females. This very readiness was her recommendation to Killigrew, to say nothing of her beauty or the merry laugh, which is said in after life to have pervaded her face till her eyes were almost invisible.[1]

As we owe our first introduction to Nelly to the Clerk of the Acts, so to him are we indebted for the earliest notice yet discovered of her appearance on the stage. Her part was that of the principal female character in a comedy (*The English Monsieur*) by the Hon. James Howard, a son of the Earl of Berkshire, the brother-in-law of Dryden, and brother of Philip, an officer in the King's Guards, and of

[1] *The London Chronicle* for Aug. 15–18, 1778; Waldron's *Downes*, p. 19.

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Robert and Edward Howard, both also writers for the stage. But these, as we shall see hereafter, were not the only connections with the stage of the Berkshire Howards. There is not much story in the *English Monsieur*, much force of character, or any particular vivacity in the dialogue. It is, however, very easy to see that the situations must have told with the audience for whom they were intended, and that the part of Lady Wealthy was one particularly adapted to the genius of Nell Gwyn; a part, in all probability, written expressly for her. Lady Wealthy is a rich widow, with perfect knowledge of the importance of wealth and beauty, a good heart, and a fine full vein of humour, a woman, in short, that teases, and at last reforms and marries, the lover she is true to. The humour of the following dialogue will allow the reader to imagine much of the by-play conducive to its success :—

Lady Wealthy.—When will I marry you! When will I love ye, you should ask first.

Welbred.—Why! don't ye?

Lady W.—Why, do I? Did you ever hear me say I did?

Welbred.—I never heard you say you did not.

Lady W.—I'll say so now, then, if you long.

Welbred.—By no means. Say not a thing in haste you may repent at leisure.

Lady W.—Come, leave your fooling, or I'll swear it.

Welbred.—Don't, widow, for then you'll lie too.

Lady W.—Indeed it seems 'tis for my money you would have me.

Welbred.—For that, and something else you have.

Lady W.—Well, I'll lay a wager thou hast lost all thy money at play, for then you're always in a marrying humour. But, d'ye hear, gentleman, d'ye think to gain me with this careless way, or that I will marry one I don't think is in love with me?

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Welbred.—Why, I am.
Lady W.—Then you would not be so merry. People in love are sad, and many times weep.
Welbred.—That will never do for thee, widow.
Lady W.—And why?
Welbred.—'Twould argue me a child; and I am confident if thou didst not verily believe I were a man, I should ne'er be thy husband. . . . Weep for thee!—ha! ha! ha!—if e'er I do!
Lady W.—Go, hang yourself.
Welbred.—Thank you for your advice.
Lady W.—When, then, shall I see you again?
Welbred.—When I have a mind to it. Come, I'll lead you to your coach for once.
Lady W.—And I'll let you for once. [*Exeunt.*

Pepys, who saw it on the 8th Dec. 1666, commends it highly. "To the King's House, and there," his entry runs, "did see a good part of the *English Monsieur*, which is a mighty pretty play, very witty and pleasant. And the women do very well; but above all, little Nelly; that I am mightily pleased with the play, and much with the house, the women doing better than I expected; and very fair women." Nor was his admiration abated when he saw it many months afterwards, April 7, 1668, at the same house.

Nell's success on the stage was such that she was soon called to represent prominent parts in the stock plays of her company. What these parts were, is, I believe, with very few exceptions, altogether unknown. One part, however, has reached us—that of Enanthe, or Celia, in the *Humorous Lieutenant* of Beaumont and Fletcher, a play that was long a favourite with the public—continuing to be frequently acted, and always with applause,

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throughout the reign of Charles II. The wit and fine poetry of the part of Celia are known to the readers of our English drama, nor is it difficult to conceive how effectively language like the following must have come from the lips of Nell Gwyn. She is in poor attire amid a mob when she sees the King's son :—

> Was it the prince they said? How my heart trembles!
> [*Enter Demetrius with a javelin in his hand.*
> 'Tis he indeed! what a sweet noble fierceness
> Dwells in his eyes! Young Meleager-like,
> When he returned from slaughter of the boar,
> Crown'd with the loves and honours of the people,
> With all the gallant youth of Greece, he looks now—
> Who could deny him love?

On one occasion of its performance Pepys was present, and though he calls it a silly play, his reader smiles at his bad taste, while he is grateful for the information that when the play was over he had gone with his wife behind the scenes, through the introduction of Mrs. Knep, who "brought to us Nelly, a most pretty woman, who acted the great part of Celia to-day very fine, and did it pretty well. I kissed her, and so did my wife, and a mighty pretty soul she is." Nor was his chronicle of the day concluded without a fresh expression of pleasure at what he had seen, summing up all as he does with the satisfactory words, "specially kissing of Nell."[1] The remark of Walter Scott will occur to many, "It is just as well that Mrs. Pepys was present on this occasion."

[1] Pepys, Jan. 23, 1666–7. Mr. Augustus Egg, A.R.A., has painted a clever picture from this passage.

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Her skill increasing with her years, other poets sought to obtain the recommendations of her wit and beauty to the success of their writings. I have said that Dryden was one of the principal supporters of the King's house, and ere long in one of his new plays a principal character was set apart for the popular comedian. The drama was a tragi-comedy called *Secret Love, or the Maiden Queen*, and an additional interest was attached to its production from the King having suggested the plot to its author, and calling it "his play." The *dramatis personæ* consist, curiously enough, of eight female and only three male parts. Good acting was not wanting to forward its success. Mohun, Hart, and Burt, three of the best performers then on the stage, filled the only male parts—while Mrs. Marshall, Mrs. Knep, "Mrs. Eleanor Gwyn,"[1] and Mrs. Corey sustained the principal female characters. The tragic scenes have little to recommend them; but the reputation of the piece was thought to have been redeemed by the excellence of the alloy of comedy, as Dryden calls it, in which it was generally agreed he was seldom happier. Even here, however, his dialogue wants that easy, brisk, pert character which Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Farquhar afterwards brought to such inimitable perfection, and of which Etherege alone affords a satisfactory example in the reign of Charles II.

[1] In the list of "Persons" prefixed to the play (ed. 1668) she is called "Mrs. Ellen Guyn." The actress with whom she is so often confused, "Mrs. Quin," appeared as "Candiope, Princess of the Blood."—G. G.

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The first afternoon of the new play was the 2nd of March 1666–7. The King and the Duke of York were both present:—so too were both Mr. and Mrs. Pepys, who had heard the play mightily commended for the regularity of its story, and what Mr. Pepys is pleased to call "the strain and wit." The chief parts (its author tells us) were performed to a height of great excellence, both serious and comic; and it was well received. The King objected, indeed, to the management of the last scene, where Celadon and Florimel (Hart and Nelly) are treating too lightly of their marriage in the presence of the Queen. But Pepys would not appear to have seen any defect of this description. "The truth is," he says, "there is a comical part done by Nell, which is Florimel, that I never can hope ever to see the like done again by man or woman. . . . So great performance of a comical part was never, I believe, in the world before as Nell do this, both as a mad girl, then most and best of all when she comes in like a young gallant, and hath the motion and carriage of a spark the most that ever I saw any man have. It makes me, I confess, admire her." Nor did the worthy critic change his opinion. He calls it, after his second visit, an "excellent play, and so done by Nell her merry part as cannot be better done in nature."[1] While after his third visit he observes that it is *impossible* to have Florimel's part, which is the most comical that ever was made for woman, ever done better than it is by Nelly.[2]

[1] Pepys, March 25, 1667. [2] *Ibid.*, May 24, 1667.

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The support of the performance rested, it must be owned, on Hart's character of Celadon, and on Nelly's part of Florimel. Nell indeed had to sustain the heavier burden of the piece. She is seldom off the stage—all the loose rattle of dialogue belongs to her, nay, more, she appears in the fifth act in male attire, dances a jig in the same act, often of itself sufficient to save a play, and ultimately speaks the epilogue in defence of the author:

I left my client yonder in a rant
Against the envious and the ignorant,
Who are, he says, his only enemies;
But he contemns their malice, and defies
The sharpest of his censurers to say
Where there is one gross fault in all his play,
The language is so fitted for each part,
The plot according to the rules of art;
And twenty other things he bid me tell you,
But I cry'd "E'en go do't yourself for Nelly!"

There are incidents and allusions in the parts of Celadon and Florimel which must have carried a personal application to those who were, speaking technically, behind the scenes. Nelly, if not actually the mistress at this time of Charles Hart, was certainly looked upon by many as very little less. Their marriage in the play is more of a Fleet or May Fair mockery than a religious ceremony,—as if, to use Florimel's own language, they were married by the more agreeable names of mistress and gallant, rather than those dull old-fashioned ones of husband and wife.

Florimel, it appears to me, must have been Nelly's *chef d'œuvre* in her art. I can hear her

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exclaiming, with a prophetic feeling of its truth, "I am resolved to grow fat and look young till forty, and then slip out of the world with the first wrinkle and the reputation of five-and-twenty;" while I can picture to myself, as my readers will easily do, Nelly in boy's clothes, dressed to the admiration of Etherege and Sedley, scanned from head to foot with much surprise by Mr. Pepys and Sir William Penn, viewed with other feelings by Lord Buckhurst on one side of the house, and by the King himself on the other, while to the admiration of the author, and of the whole audience, she exclaims, with wonderful by-play, "Yonder they are, and this way they must come. If clothes and a *bonne mien* will take 'm, I shall do't.—Save you, Monsieur Florimel! Faith, methinks you are a very janty fellow, *poudré et ajusté* as well as the best of 'em. I can manage the little comb—set my hat, shake my garniture, toss about my empty noddle, walk with a courant slur, and at every step peck down my head:—if I should be mistaken for some courtier, now, pray where's the difference?" This is what Beau Hewit or Beau Fielding were enacting every day in their lives, and Colley Cibber lived to be the last actor who either felt or could make others feel its truth and application.

Nelly was living at this time in the fashionable part of Drury Lane, the Strand or Covent Garden end, for Drury Lane in the days of Charles II. was inhabited by a very different class of people from those who now occupy it—or, indeed, who have lived in it since the time Gay guarded us from

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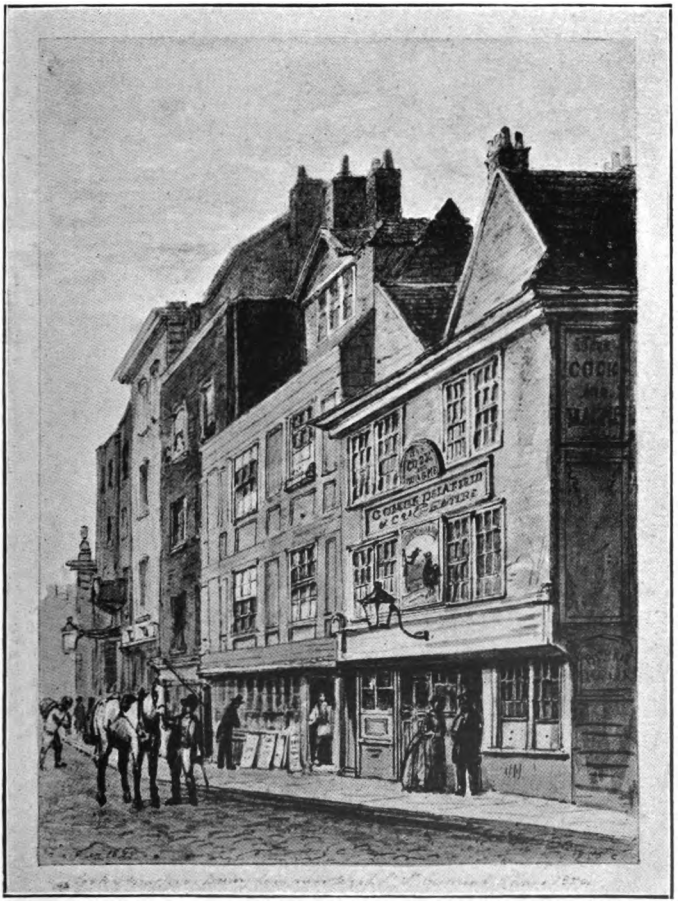
"Drury's mazy courts and dark abodes"—since Pope described it only too truly as peopled by drabs of the lowest character, and by authors "lulled by soft zephyrs" through the broken pane of a garret window. The upper end, towards St. Giles's Pound and Montague House, had its squalid quarters, like Lewknor's Lane and the Coal Yard, in which, as we have concluded, our Nelly was born; but at the Strand end lived the Earl of Anglesey, long Lord Privy Seal, and the Earls of Clare and Craven, whose names are still perpetuated in Clare Market and Craven Yard. Drury Lane, when Nelly was living there, was a kind of Park Lane of the present day, made up of noblemen's mansions, small houses, inns, and stable-yards. Nor need the similitude be thus restricted; for the Piazza of Covent Garden was then to Drury Lane what Grosvenor Square is at present to Park Lane. Squalid quarters, indeed, have always been near neighbours to lordly localities. When Nelly lodged in Drury Lane, Covent Garden had its Lewknor Lane, and Lincoln's Inn Fields their Whetstone Park. Belgravia has now its Tothill Street—Portman Square has its contaminating neighbourhood of Calmel Buildings—and one of the most infamous of alleys is within half a stone's throw of St. James's Palace.

Nelly's lodgings were near the lodgings of Lacy the actor, at the top of Maypole Alley,

Where Drury Lane descends into the Strand,

and over against the Gate of Craven House. The

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The Cock and Magpie, Nell Gwyn's lodgings in Drury Lane. *From a water-colour drawing made in* 1850 *by J. Findlay.*

[*To face p.* 32.

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look-out afforded a peep into a part of Wych Street, and while standing at the doorway you could see the far-famed Maypole in the Strand, at the bottom of the alley to which it had lent its name.

This Maypole, long a conspicuous ornament to the west-end of London, rose to a great height above the surrounding houses, and was surmounted by a crown and vane, with the royal arms richly gilded. It had been set up again immediately after the Restoration. Great ceremonies attended its erection: twelve picked seamen superintending the tackle, and ancient people clapping their hands, and exclaiming, "Golden days begin to appear!" Nelly must have remembered the erection of the Maypole at the bottom of the lane in which she was born; but there is little save some gable-ends and old timber-fronts near her "lodgings door" to assist in carrying the mind back to the days of the Maypole and the merry monarch whose recall it was designed to commemorate.

Among the many little domestic incidents perpetuated by Pepys, there are few to which I would sooner have been a witness than the picture he has left us of Nelly standing at her door watching the milkmaids on May-day. The Clerk of the Acts on his way from Seething Lane in the City met, he tells us, "many milkmaids with garlands upon their pails, dancing with a fiddle before them," and saw pretty Nelly standing at her lodgings door in Drury Lane in her smock sleeves and bodice looking upon one. "She seemed," he adds, "a mighty

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pretty creature." This was in 1667, while her recent triumphs on the stage were still fresh at Court, and the obscurity of her birth was a common topic of talk and banter among the less fortunate inhabitants of the lane she lived in. The scene so lightly sketched by Pepys might furnish no unfitting subject for the pencil of Leslie or Maclise—a subject, indeed, which would shine in their hands. That absence of all false pride, that innate love of unaffected nature, and that fondness for the simple sports of the people which the incident exhibits, are characteristics of Nelly from the first moment to the last—following her naturally, and sitting alike easily and gracefully upon her, whether at her humble lodgings in Drury Lane, at her handsome house in Pall Mall, or even under the gorgeous cornices of Whitehall.

But I have no intention of finding a model heroine in a coal-yard, or any wish either to palliate or condemn too severely the frailties of the woman whose story I have attempted to relate. It was, therefore, within a very few months of the May-day scene I have just described, that whispers asserted, and the news was soon published in every coffee-house in London, how little Miss Davis of the Duke's House had become the mistress of the King, and Nell Gwyn at the other theatre the mistress of Lord Buckhurst. Whoever is at all conversant with the manners and customs of London life in the reign of Charles II. will confirm me in the statement that two such announcements, even at the same time, would cause but

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little surprise, or indeed any other feeling than that of envy at their good luck. With the single exception of Mrs. Betterton, there was not, I believe, an actress at either theatre who had not been, or was not then the mistress of some person about the Court. Actors were looked upon as little better than shopmen or servants. When the Honourable Edward Howard was struck by Lacy of the King's House, a very general feeling prevailed that Howard should have run his sword through the menial body of the actor. Nor was this feeling altogether extinguished till the period of the Kembles. It was entirely owing to the exertions of the great Lord Mansfield, that Arthur Murphy, less than a century ago, was allowed to enter his name on the books of Lincoln's Inn. He had been previously refused by the Benchers of the Middle Temple, for no other reason than that he had been an actor.[1] Nay, George Selwyn, it is well known, excluded Richard Brinsley Sheridan from Brooks's on three occasions because *his father* had been upon the stage.

Nor did actresses fare better than actors. If anything, indeed, they were still worse treated. They were looked upon as women of the worst character, possessed of no inclination or inducement to virtue. Few, indeed, were found to share the sentiment expressed by one of Shadwell's manliest characters, "I love the stage too well to keep

[1] Dr. Johnson is thought to have objected to Garrick becoming a member of "the Club" for a like reason. Boswell's *Johnson*, ed. 1848, p. 164.—G. G.

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any of their women, to make 'em proud and insolent, and despise that calling to take up a worse." The frailty of "playhouse flesh and blood"[1] afforded a common topic for the poet in his prologue or his epilogue, and other writers than Lee might be found who complain of the practice of "keeping" as a grievance to the stage.[2] Davenant, foreseeing their fate from an absence of any control, boarded his four principal actresses in his own house; but, with one exception (that of Mrs. Betterton before referred to), the precaution was altogether without effect. The King, Prince Rupert, the Duke of Richmond, the Earl of Oxford, Lord Buckhurst, Sir Charles Sedley, Sir Philip Howard, his brother, Sir Robert Howard, were all successful in the arts of seduction or inducement. So bad indeed was the moral discipline of the times, that even Mrs. Knep, loose as were her notions of virtue, could see the necessity of parting with a pretty servant-girl, as the tiring-room was no place for the preservation of her innocence.[3] The virtuous life of Mrs. Bracegirdle, and her spirited rebuke to the Earl of Burlington, stand out in noble relief from the conduct of her fellow-actresses. The Earl had sent her a letter and a present of a handsome set of china. The charming actress retained the letter and informed the servant of the mistake. The letter, she said, was for her, but the china was for Lady Burlington. When the Earl returned home

[1] Dryden's Prologue to *Marriage-à-la-Mode*.
[2] Epilogue to *The Rival Queens*.
[3] Pepys, April 7, 1668.

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he found his Countess all happiness at the unexpected present from her husband.[1]

Times, however, changed after Nelly had gone, and the Stuarts had ceased to reign, for ennobled actresses are now common enough in the English peerage. Other changes too took place. Mrs. Barry walked home in her clogs, and Mrs. Bracegirdle in her pattens; but Mrs. Oldfield went away in her chair,[2] and Lavinia Fenton (the original Polly Peachum) rolled westward in her coroneted carriage as Duchess of Bolton.[3]

It says little for the morality of London in the reign of Charles II., but something for the taste of the humble orange-girl, that the lover who had attracted her, and with whom she was now living in the lovely neighbourhood of Epsom, was long looked up to as the best bred man of his age:

> None ever had so strange an art
> His passion to convey
> Into a list'ning virgin's heart,
> And steal her soul away.[4]

But Buckhurst had other qualities to recommend him than his youth (he was thirty at this time), his rank, his good heart, and his good breeding. He had already distinguished himself by his personal

[1] Walpole to Mann (*Mann Letters*), iii. 254.

[2] Walpole, May 26, 1742.

[3] Mr. Murray, of Albemarle Street, possesses Hogarth's interesting picture of the first representation of the *Beggar's Opera*, in its original frame. Here his Grace of Bolton is gazing upon Polly from one stage-box—while in the other, Bolingbroke is seated by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu.

[4] Song by Sir C. S. [Sir Carr Scrope or Sir Charles Sedley] in Etherege's *Man of Mode; or, Sir Fopling Flutter.*

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intrepidity in the war against the Dutch; had written the best song of its kind in the English language, and some of the severest and most refined satires we possess; was the friend of all the poets of eminence in his time, as he was afterwards the most munificent patron of men of genius that this country has yet seen. The most eminent masters in their several lines asked and abided by his judgment, and afterwards dedicated their works to him in grateful acknowledgment of his taste and favours. Butler owed to him that the Court 'tasted" his *Hudibras;* Wycherley that the town "liked" his *Plain Dealer;* and the Duke of Buckingham deferred to publish his *Rehearsal* till he was sure, as he expressed it, that my Lord Buckhurst would not "rehearse" upon him again. Nor was this all. His table was one of the last that gave us an example of the old housekeeping of an English nobleman. A freedom reigned about it which made every one of the guests think himself at home, and an abundance which showed that the master's hospitality extended to many more than those who had the honour to sit at table with himself.[1] Nor has he been less happy after death. Pope wrote his epitaph and Prior his panegyric—while Walpole and Macaulay (two men with so little apparently in common) have drawn his character with a warmth of approbation rather to have been expected from those who had shared his bounty or enjoyed his friendship, than from the

[1] Prior's Dedication of his Poems to Lord Buckhurst's son, Lionel, first Duke of Dorset.

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colder judgments of historians looking back calmly upon personages who had long ceased to influence or affect society.

With such a man, and with Sedley's resistless wit to add fresh vigour to the conversation, it is easy to understand what Pepys had heard, that Lord Buckhurst and Nelly kept "merry house" at Epsom,—

> All hearts fall a-leaping wherever she comes,
> And beat day and night like my Lord Craven's drums.[1]

What this Epsom life was like shall be the subject of another chapter.

[1] Song by Lord Buckhurst [on "bonny black Bess," who, according to Horace Walpole, was Mrs. Barnes. See Mr. A. H. Bullen's *Musa Proterva*, p. 35].

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CHAPTER III.

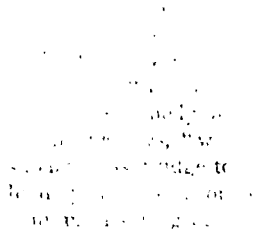
Epsom in the reign of Charles II.—England in 1667—Nelly resumes her Engagement at the King's Theatre—Inferior in Tragedy to Comedy—Plays Mirida in *All Mistaken*—Miss Davis of the Duke's Theatre—Her song, "My Lodging it is on the Cold Ground," parodied by Nell—Influence of the Duke of Buckingham in controlling the predilections of the King—Charles II. at the Duke's Theatre—Nelly has leading parts in three of Dryden's new Plays—Buckhurst is made a Gentleman of the Bedchamber, promised a peerage, and sent on a sleeveless errand into France—Nell becomes the Mistress of the King—Plays Almahide in *The Conquest of Granada*—The King more than ever enamoured—Parallel case of "Perdita" Robinson and George IV.

NELLY was now at Epsom, then and long after the fashionable resort of the richer citizens of London. "The foolish world is never to be mended," is the remark of "a gentleman of wit and sense" in Shadwell's comedy of *The Virtuoso*. "Your glass coach," he says, "will to Hyde Park for air; the suburb fools trudge to Lamb's Conduit or Tottenham; your sprucer sort of citizens gallop to Epsom; your mechanic gross fellows, shewing much con-

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P. Lely Eques pinx.t G. Valck sculp. et ex.

Nell Gwin.

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jugal affection, strut before their wives, each with a child in his arms, to Islington or Hogsden." The same agreeable writer, whose plays supply truer and happier illustrations of the manners and customs of the time than any other contemporary dramatist, has left us a comedy called *Epsom Wells*, in which, notwithstanding the sneer of Dryden about his "hungry Epsom-prose," he has contrived to interest us by peopling the place with the usual frequenters out of term-time; men of wit and pleasure; young ladies of wit, beauty, and fortune; with a parson and a country justice; with two cheating, sharking, cowardly bullies; with two rich citizens of London and their wives, one a comfit-maker, the other a haberdasher, and both cuckolds ("Epsom water-drinking" with other ladies of pleasure); with hectors from Covent Garden, a constable, a Dogberry-like watch, and two country fiddlers—in short, by picturing "the freedom of Epsom" as it existed in an age of easy virtue.

The Derby and the Oaks, the races which have rendered Epsom so famous, and our not less celebrated Tattenham Corner, were then unknown; but the King's Head and the New Inn, Clay Hill and Mawse's Garden, were favourite names, full of attractions to London apprentices, sighing to see their indentures at an end, and Epsom no longer excluded from their places of resort. The waters were considered efficacious, and the citizens east of Temple Bar were supposed to receive as much benefit from their use, as the courtiers west of the

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Bar were presumed to receive from the waters of Tunbridge Wells. The alderman or his deputy, on their way to this somewhat inaccessible suburb of the reign of Charles II., were met at Tooting by lodging-house-keepers, tradesmen, and quack-doctors, with so many clamorous importunities for patronage, that the very expressive English word *touting* derives its origin from the village where this plying for trade was carried to so importune an extent.

There is now at Epsom, or was to be seen there till very lately, a small inn with the sign of the King's Head, lying somewhat out of the present town, on the way to the wells. It was at "the next house" to this inn, or to an inn with the same name, that Nelly and Lord Buckhurst put up, keeping "merry house," with Sedley to assist them in laughing at the "Bow-bell suckers" who resorted to the Epsom waters.[1] Nelly would contribute her share to the merriment of the scene around them. The citizens of London were hated by the players. They had successfully opposed them in all their early attempts in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. to erect a theatre within the jurisdiction of the City; and at no time had they ever encouraged the drama by their presence. The poets and actors lived by the King and Court, while they repaid their opponents and gratified the courtiers by holding up every citizen as a cuckold and a fool. So long was this feeling perpetuated on the stage (it still lives in

[1] Pepys, July 14, 1667.

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our literature), that Garrick, in his endeavour to supplant the usual performance of the *London Cuckolds* on the 9th of November (Lord Mayor's day), was reduced to play first to a noisy, and next to an empty house.

Whilst Buckhurst and Nelly kept "merry house' at Epsom in the months of July and August 1667, it was not altogether merry in England elsewhere. The Plague of 1665 had been followed by the Fire of 1666, and both Plague and Fire in 1667 by the national shame of a Dutch fleet insulting us in the Thames, burning some of our finest ships in the Medway at Chatham, and by the undeserved disgrace inflicted by the King and his imperious mistress, Castlemaine, on the great Lord Clarendon. Wise and good men, too, were departing from among us. Cowley finished the life of an elegant and amiable recluse at Chertsey in Surrey, and Jeremy Taylor that of a saint at Lisnegarry in Ireland. England, too, in the same year, had lost the loyal Marquess of Worcester and the virtuous Earl of Southampton, neither of whom could she well spare at such a period; on the other hand, the country was receiving a noble addition to her literature by the publication of *Paradise Lost;* but this few at the time cared to read, as the work of "*that* Milton who wrote for the regicides,"[1]—"*that* Paradise Lost of Milton's which some are pleased to call a poem,"[2] or chose to understand,

[1] Evelyn's *Diary*, June 2, 1686.
[2] Thomas Rymer's *The Tragedies of the last age consider'd . . . In a Letter to Fleetwood Shepheard* [1678], p. 143.

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from the seriousness of the subject, or the grandeur of its treatment.

At the Court, where undisguised libertinism was still triumphant, the burning of the city began to be talked of as an old story, like that of the burning of Troy, and the disgrace at Chatham as something to be obliterated by the disgrace of the Lord Chancellor. Indeed, there was no feeling of fear, or any sentiment of deserved dishonour, maintained at Court. On the very day on which the Great Seal was taken from Clarendon, and his ruin effected, the Countess of Castlemaine, one of the leading instruments of his fall, was admiring the rope-dancing of Jacob Hall, and laughing at the drolls and odd animals exhibited to the citizens at Bartholomew Fair!

Nelly, after a month's absence, returned to London in August 1667, and resumed some of her old parts at the theatre in Drury Lane, playing Bellario in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Philaster;* Panthea, in *A King and No King* of the same authors; Cydaria, in *The Indian Emperor* of Dryden and his brother-in-law; Samira, in Sir Robert Howard's *Surprisal;* Flora, in *Flora's Vagaries*, a comedy attributed to Rhodes; and Mirida, in *All Mistaken, or the Mad Couple*, of the Hon. James Howard. Of her performance in some of these parts Pepys again is our only informant. How graphic are his entries!—

"22 Aug. 1667.—After dinner with my lord Brouncker and his mistress to the King's playhouse, and there saw *The Indian Emperor*, where I find Nell come again, which I am

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glad of; but was most infinitely displeased with her being put to act the Emperor's daughter, which is a great and serious part, which she do most basely. The rest of the play, though pretty good, was not well acted by most of them, methought; so that I took no great content in it.

"26 Aug. 1667.—I walked to the King's playhouse, there to meet Sir W. Pen, and saw *The Surprisal*, a very mean play I thought, or else it was because I was out of humour, and but very little company in the house. But there Sir W. Pen and I had a great deal of discourse with [Orange] Moll, who tells us that Nell is already left by my lord Buckhurst, and that he makes sport of her, and swears she hath had all she could get of him; and Hart, her great admirer, now hates her; and that she is very poor, and hath lost my Lady Castlemaine, who was her great friend also; but she is come to the house, but is neglected by them all.

"5 Oct. 1667.—To the King's house, and there, going in, met with Knepp, and she took us up into the tireing rooms; and to the women's shift, where Nell was dressing herself [as Flora], and was all unready, and is very pretty, prettier than I thought. And so walked all up and down the house above, and then below into the scene-room, and there sat down, and she gave us fruit; and here I read the questions to Knepp, while she answered me, through all her part of *Flora's Figurys*, which was acted to-day. But, Lord! to see how they were both painted would make a man mad, and did make me loath them; and what base company of men comes among them, and how lewdly they talk! and how poor the men are in clothes, and yet what a show they make on the stage by candle-light, is very observable. But to see how Nell cursed, for having so few people in the pit, was pretty; the other house carrying away all the people at the new play, and is said now-a-days to have generally most company, as being better players.

"11 Nov. 1667.—To the King's playhouse, and there saw *The Indian Emperor*, a good play, but not so good as people cry it up, I think, though, above all things, Nell's ill-speaking of a great part made me mad.

"26 Dec. 1667.—With my wife to the King's playhouse, and there saw *The Surprisal*, which did not please me to-day, the actors not pleasing me, and especially Nell's acting of a serious part, which she spoils.

"28 Dec. 1667.—To the King's house, and there saw *The Mad Couple*, which is but an ordinary play; but only Nell's and Hart's mad parts are most excellently done, but

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especially hers, which makes it a miracle to me to think how if she do any serious part, as, the other day, just like a fool or changling; and in a mad part do beyond all imitation almost."

That Nell hated "serious parts," in which, as Pepys assures us, she was poor, we have her own testimony, in an epilogue which she spoke a few months later to the tragedy of the *Duke of Lerma*:

> I know you in your hearts
> Hate serious plays—as I hate serious parts.

And again in the epilogue to *Tyrannick Love*:

> I die
> Out of my calling in a tragedy.

The truth is (as I see reason to believe), such parts were thrust upon her by Hart, her old admirer, who hated her for preferring Lord Buckhurst to himself. But this feeling was soon overcome, and Nell, as Mirida in the comedy of *All Mistaken*, added to her well-earned reputation as an actress, obeying the advice of Mrs. Barry, "Make yourself mistress of your part, and leave the figure and action to nature."[1]

All Mistaken, or the Mad Couple, a play commended by some, says Langbaine, "as an excellent comedy," has little merit of its own to recommend it to the reader. The whole success of the performance must have rested on Hart and Nelly. Philidor (Hart) is a mad, or, as we should now call him, a madcap, kinsman of an Italian duke, and Mirida (Nelly) is a madcap young lady of the same

[1] Curll's *Stage*, p. 62.

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eccentric school. Philidor is troubled with clamorous importunities for marriage from six young ladies whom he has betrayed, and for money from those nurses by whom his children have been taken; and Mirida is persecuted with the importunate addresses, at the same time, of a very lean and of a very fat lover. Some of the pleasantries to which the madcap couple resort are of a coarse and practical character. Philidor tricks his besiegers, and Mirida replies to her importunate lovers that she will marry the lean one when he is fatter, and the fat one when he is leaner. The arts which the suitors have recourse to are somewhat tedious, and certainly not over decent. Yet it is easy to see that the play would tell with the audience to whom it was addressed, for many of the situations are humorous in the extreme. In one of the scenes Philidor and Mirida are bound back to back by the six ladies, Philidor losing his money and his hat, and Mirida consoling herself by the entry of a fiddler.

[Enter *Fiddler*.] *Mirida*.—A fiddle, nay then I am made again; I'd have a dance if I had nothing but my smock on. Fiddler, strike up and play my jig, call'd "I care not a pin for any man."[1]

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[1] Nell was famous for dancing jigs. The Duke of Buckingham, in his Epilogue to *The Chances* [an alteration from Beaumont and Fletcher, performed at the theatre in Dorset Garden in 1682], laughs at poets who mistook the praise given to Nelly's jig for the praise bestowed on their own performances:—

"Besides the author dreads the strut and mien
Of new prais'd poets, having often seen
Some of his fellows, who have writ before,

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Fiddler.—Indeed I can't stay. I am going to play to some gentlemen.

Mirida.—Nay, thou shalt stay but a little.

Fiddler.—Give me half-a-crown then.

Mirida.—I have no money about me; but here, take my hankercher. [*Dance and Exit.*

In another part Mirida manages a sham funeral for Philidor, to which the six young ladies are invited to hear the will of the deceased.

Mirida.—Poor young man, he was killed yesterday by a duel.

"Item. I give to Mrs. Mary for a reason that she knows, 500*l.* Item. 500*l.* to Mrs. Margaret for a reason she knows. Item. 500*l.* to Mrs. Sarah for a reason she knows. Item. 500*l.* to Mrs. Martha for a reason she knows. Item. 500*l.* to Mrs. Alice for a reason she knows. Item. 500*l.* to Mrs. Elinor for a reason she knows, and so to all the rest. Item. To my nurses I leave each of them 20*l.* a year apiece for their lives, besides their arrears due to them for nursing. These sums of money and legacies I leave to be raised and paid out of my manor of Constantinople, in which the Great Turk is now tenant for life." [*Laughs aside.*] If they should hear how their legacies are to be paid, how they'd fall a-drumming on his coffin!

There is more of this; but it is time to turn to that incident from which the play derived its popularity, its satire on a recent event at the Duke's Theatre.

The Rivals, a play altered by Davenant from *The Two Noble Kinsmen* of Beaumont and Fletcher, or rather of Fletcher alone, was brought upon the stage about 1664, but would not appear to have

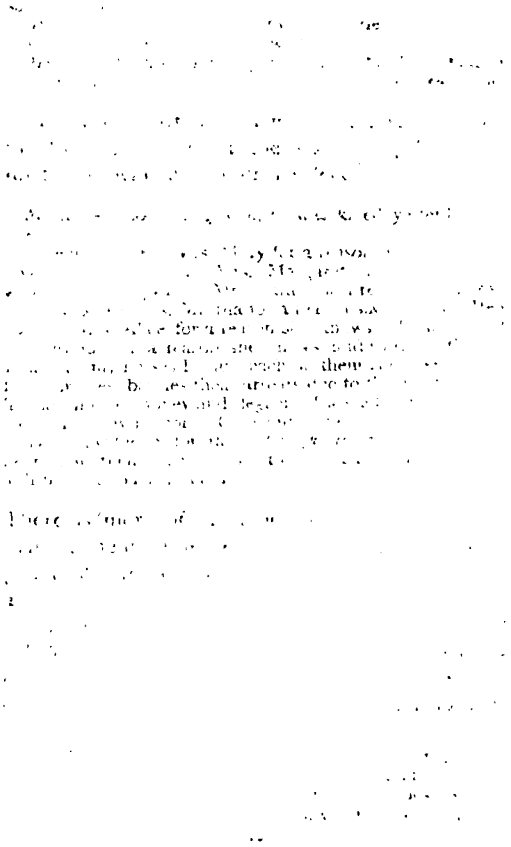
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When Nel has danc'd her Jig, steal to the door,
Hear the pit clap, and with conceit of that,
Swell, and believe themselves the Lord knows what."
Works, ed. 1715, pt. ii. p. 150.

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P. Lely Eques. pinxt. P.V.B. sculpsit.

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met with any great success till 1667, when the part of Celania was represented by little Miss Davis, who danced a jig in the play and then sang a song in it, both of which found their way direct to the heart of the merry monarch. The jig was probably some fresh French importation, or nothing more than a rustic measure, with a few foreign innovations. The song has reached us, and has much ballad beauty to recommend it.

My lodging it is on the cold ground,
And very hard is my fare,
But that which troubles me most is
The unkindness of my dear.
Yet still I cry, O turn, love,
And I prythee, love, turn to me,
For thou art the man that I long for,
And alack what remedy!

I'll crown thee with a garland of straw, then,
And I'll marry thee with a rush ring,
My frozen hopes shall thaw then,
And merrily we will sing.
O turn to me, my dear love,
And prythee, love, turn to me,
For thou art the man that alone canst
Procure my liberty.

But if thou wilt harden thy heart still,
And be deaf to my pitiful moan,
Then I must endure the smart still,
And tumble in straw alone.
Yet still I cry, O turn, love,
And I prythee, love, turn to me,
For thou art the man that alone art
The cause of my misery.[1]

[1] The stage direction is—"That done she lies down and falls asleep." [The music of the ballad will be found in Hawkins's *Hist. of Music*, iv. 525.]

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The success of the song is related by the prompter at the theatre in his curious little volume, called *Roscius Anglicanus*. "All the women's parts," says Downes, "were admirably acted, but what pleased most was the part of Celania, a shepherdess, mad for love, and her song of 'My lodging is on the cold ground,' which she performed," he adds, "so charmingly that not long after it raised her from her bed on the cold ground to a bed royal."[1]

I might be excused for referring, at this period of Nelly's life, to the ribald personalities common to the stage in the reign of Charles II., but I am unwilling to stop the stream of my narrative by delaying to relate the personal reference made by Nell, in the play of *All Mistaken*, to the song and the incident at the Duke's House, which raised little Miss Davis to a "bed royal." The scene in *All Mistaken* which doubtless gave the greatest delight to the audience at Drury Lane was that in the last act, where Pinguisier, the fat lover, sobs his complaints into the ear of the madcap Mirida.

Mirida.—Dear love, come sit thee in my lap, and let me know if I can enclose thy world of fat and love within these arms. See, I cannot nigh compass my desires by a mile.

Pinguisier.—How is my fat a rival to my joys! sure I shall weep it all away. [*Cries.*

Mirida.—

Lie still, my babe, lie still and sleep,
It grieves me sore to see thee weep,

---

1 *Roscius Anglicanus*, ed. 1708, p. 24. [Downes is wrong in stating that she enacted the part of a "shepherdess mad for love," as a comparison with the printed text of the play will prove.]

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Wert thou but leaner I were glad;
Thy fatness makes thy dear love sad.
What a lump of love I have in my arms!

My lodging is on the cold boards,
And wonderful hard is my fare,
But that which troubles me most is
The fatness of my dear.
Yet still I cry, Oh melt, love,
And I prythee now melt apace,
For thou art the man I should long for
If 'twere not for thy grease.

Pinguisier.—

Then prythee don't harden thy heart still,
And be deaf to my pitiful moan,
Since I do endure the smart still,
And for my fat do groan.
Then prythee now turn, my dear love,
And I prythee now turn to me,
For, alas! I am too fat still
To roll so far to thee.

The nearer the fat man rolls towards her, the further she rolls away from him, till she at length rises and laughs her hearty Mrs. Jordan-like mirth-provoking laugh, first at the man and then towards the audience, seizes a couple of swords from a cutler passing by, disarms her fat lover, and makes him the ridicule of the whole house. It is easy to see that this would not take now, even with another Nelly to represent it; but every age has its fashion and its humour, and that of Charles II. had fashions and humours of its own, quite as diverting as any of the representations and incidents which still prove attractive to a city or a west-end audience

"Little Miss Davis" danced and sang divinely, but was not particularly beautiful, though she had fine eyes and a neat figure, both of which are

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preserved in her portrait at Cashiobury, by Sir Peter Lely.[1] The popular belief still lingering among the cottages surrounding the old Jacobean mansion of the Howards at Charlton in Wiltshire, that she was the daughter of a blacksmith, and was at one time a milkmaid, can only in part be true. Pepys was informed by Mrs. Pierce, wife of James Pierce, surgeon to the Duke of York, and surgeon of the regiment commanded by the Duke, that she was an illegitimate child of Colonel Howard, son of the Earl of Berkshire, and brother of James Howard, author of the play in which, as we have seen, she was held up to ridicule through the inimitable acting of Nell Gwyn. The King's affection for her was shown in a marked and open manner. The ring of rushes referred to in the song was exchanged for a ring of the value of £700, and her lodging about Ludgate or Lincoln's Inn (the usual resorts of the players at the Duke's Theatre) for a house in Suffolk Street, Haymarket, furnished by the King expressly for her use. The Queen, before she was worn into complete indifference by the uncontrolled vices of her husband, resented them at times with the spirit of a woman. When Miss Davis was dancing one of her favourite "jigs" in a play at Court, the Queen rose and "would not stay to see it." Nor was the imperious Countess of Castle-

[1] This is a half-length, seated,—the same portrait, I suspect, which Mrs. Beale saw in Bap. May's lodgings at Whitehall. The curious full-length portrait of her in after-life by Kneller, and now at Audley End, barely supplies a single feature that is attractive.

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maine less incensed than the Queen herself at the unwelcome intrusion of little Miss Davis within the innermost chambers and withdrawing-rooms of Whitehall. Her revenge, however, was peculiarly her own—she ran into open infidelities ; and, as the King had set her aside for an actress at his brother's house, so, to be "even" with him (the expression is in Pepys), she extended her favours to Charles Hart, the handsome and celebrated actor, at his own house.

The Duke of Buckingham (the wit, and the second and last Duke of the Villiers family) is thought to have been the principal agent at this time in directing and confirming the predilections of the King. The Duke and Lady Castlemaine had newly quarrelled, fiercely and almost openly, and both were devising means of revenge characteristic of their natures. By the influence of the Countess the Duke was removed from his seat at the Council, and the Duke in return "studied to take the King from her by new amours," and thinking, truly enough, that a "gaiety of humour" would take with his Majesty more than beauty without humour, he encouraged his passion for little Miss Davis by all the arts and insinuations he was master of. The King, too, was readier than usual to adopt any new excess of enjoyment which Buckingham could offer him. La Belle Stewart, the only woman for whom he would seem to have entertained any sincere affection, had left his Court in secret a few months before, and worse still, had given herself in marriage to the Duke of Richmond,

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without his approbation, and even without his knowledge. Castlemaine was now past her zenith, though she retained much beauty to the last, and found admirers in the great Duke of Marlborough, when young, and in Beau Fielding, long the handsomest man about town. Yet Charles was not really unkind to her at any time. The song which he caused Will Legge to sing to her—

> Poor Alinda's growing old,—
> Those charms are now no more,—[1]

must have caused her some temporary uneasiness and a disdainful curl of her handsome and imperious lip; but she knew her influence, and managed to retain it almost unimpaired to the very last, in spite of many excesses, which Buckingham seldom failed to discover and make known to the King.

Of the King, the Countess, and pretty Miss Davis, at this period, Pepys affords us a sketch in little—but to the point:—

"21 Dec. 1668. To the Duke's playhouse, and saw *Macbeth*. The King and court there; and we sat just under them and my Lady Castlemaine, and close to the woman that comes into the pit, a kind of a loose gossip, that pretends to be like her, and is so, something. And my wife, by my troth, appeared, I think, as pretty as any of them; I never thought so much before; and so did Talbot and W. Hewer, as they said, I heard, to one another. The King and Duke of York minded me, and smiled upon me, at the handsome woman near me; but it vexed me to see Moll Davis, in the box over the King's and my Lady Castlemaine's head, look down upon the King, and he up to her; and so did my Lady Castlemaine once, to see who it was; but when she saw her, she looked like fire, which troubled me."

[1] Lord Dartmouth's note in Burnet, ed. 1823, i. 458. Where are these verses to be found?

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To complete the picture which Pepys has left us, we have only to turn to *The True Widow* of Shadwell, where, in the fourth act, the scene is laid in "the Playhouse," and stage directions of this character occur: "Enter women masked"; "Several young coxcombs fool with the orange-women"; "He sits down and lolls in the orange-wench's lap"; "Raps people on the backs and twirls their hats, and then looks demurely, as if he did not do it";—such were daily occurrences at both theatres in the reign of Charles II.

> Such were our pleasures in the days of yore,
> When amorous Charles Britannia's sceptre bore;
> The mighty scene of joy the Park was made,
> And Love in couples peopled every shade.
> But since at Court the moral taste is lost,
> What mighty sums have velvet couches cost![1]

We are now less barefaced in our immoralities, but are we really better? Was Whitehall in the reign of Charles II. worse than St. James's Palace in the reign of George II., or Carlton House in the regency of George IV.? Were Mrs. Robinson, Mary Anne Clarke, or Dora Jordan better women then Eleanor Gwyn or Mary Davis? Will future historians prefer the old Duke of Queensberry and the late Marquis of Hertford to the Duke of Buckingham and the Earl of Rochester?

A new play of this period, in which Nelly performed the heroine, is the *Black Prince*, written by the Earl of Orrery, and acted for the first time at the King's House, on the 19th of October 1667.

1 Gay to Pulteney.

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Nelly's part was Alizia or Alice Piers, the mistress of Edward III.; and the following lines must have often in after-life occurred to recollection, not from their poetry, which is little enough, but from their particular applicability to her own story:

> You know, dear friend, when to this court I came,
> My eyes did all our bravest youths inflame;
> And in that happy state I lived awhile,
> When Fortune did betray me with a smile;
> Or rather Love against my peace did fight;
> And to revenge his power, which I did slight,
> Made Edward our victorious monarch be
> One of those many who did sigh for me.
> All other flame but his I did deride;
> They rather made my trouble than my pride:
> But this, when told me, made me quickly know,
> Love is a god to which all hearts must bow.

The King was present at the first performance, when his own heart was acknowledging and his own eyes betraying the sense he entertained of the beauty and wit of the charming actress who played Alizia on the stage, and who was hereafter to move in the same sphere in which the original had moved —with greater honesty and much more affection.

While little Miss Davis was living in handsome lodgings in Suffolk Street, and baring her hand in public in the face of the Countess of Castlemaine, to show the 700*l.* ring which the King had given her, a report arose that "the King had sent for Nelly."[1] Nor was it long before this gossip of the town was followed by other rumours about her, not likely, it was thought, to be true, from her constant appearance on the stage, speaking prologues in

[1] Pepys, January 11, 1667–8.

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fantastic hats and Amazonian habits,[1] playing as she did, too, at this time, Valeria in Dryden's last new tragedy of *Tyrannick Love, or the Royal Martyr*, and Donna Jacintha in Dryden's latest comedy, called *An Evening's Love, or the Mock Astrologer*. Other rumours, relating to Lord Buckhurst, and since found to be true, were current at the same time,—that he had been made a groom of the King's bed-chamber, with a pension of a thousand pounds a year, commencing from Michaelmas, 1668; that he had received the promise of a peerage at his grandfather's death; and that he had been sent by the King on a complimentary visit to a foreign power, or, as Dryden is said to have called it, on a "sleeveless errand"[2] into France. In the meantime gossips in both the theatres were utterly at a loss to reconcile the stories repeated by the orange-women that Nelly was often at Whitehall with her constant attention to her theatrical engagements, and the increasing skill she exhibited in the acquirements of her art. Nor was it till the winter of 1669, or rather the spring of 1670, that the fact of the postponement of a new tragedy by

[1] Before the 1669 edition *Catiline* is a prologue "to be merrily spoke by Mrs. Nell in an Amazonian habit." Pepys and Evelyn both saw *Catiline* acted on the 19th of Dec. 1668. [Nell Gwyn acted Jacintha in 1668, and Valeria in the winter of 1668–9. The epilogue to *Tyrannick Love*, "spoken by Mrs. Ellen when she was to be carried off dead by the bearers," was apparently written for the express purpose of displaying the actress's comic powers after she had performed but indifferently in a part unsuitable to her.]

[2] Note by Boyer in his translation of *De Grammont*, 8vo, 1714, p. 343.

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Dryden, on account of Nelly's being away, confirmed some of the previous rumours; and it was known even east of Temple Bar, and among the Puritans in the Blackfriars, that Nelly had become the mistress of the King.

When this important change in her condition took place—a change that removed her from many temptations, and led to the exhibition of traits of character and good feeling which more than account for the fascination connected with her name—she was studying the part of Almahide in Dryden's new tragedy, *The Conquest of Granada.* Before, however, the play could be produced, Nelly was near giving birth to the future Duke of St. Albans, and therefore unable to appear, so that Dryden was obliged to postpone the production of his piece till another season. The poet alludes to this postponement in his epilogue:

> Think him not duller for the year's delay;
> He was prepared, the women were away;
> And men without their parts can hardly play.
> If they through sickness seldom did appear,
> Pity the virgins of each theatre;
> For at both houses 'twas a sickly year!
> And pity us, your servants, to whose cost
> In one such sickness nine whole months were lost.

The allusion is to Miss Davis at the Duke's, and to Nelly at the King's; but the poet's meaning has escaped his editors.

The *Conquest of Granada* was first performed in the autumn of 1670,—Hart playing Almanzor to Nelly's Almahide. With what manliness and grace

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of elocution must Hart have delivered the well-known lines,—

> I am as free as Nature first made man,
> Ere the base law of servitude began,
> When wild in woods the noble savage ran.

The attraction, however, of the play rested mainly upon Nelly, who spoke the prologue "in a broad-brimmed hat and waist-belt," and apologised in the following manner for her appearance, to the renewed delight of the whole audience :

> This jest was first of th' other House's making,
> And, five times tried, has never failed of taking;
> For 'twere a shame a poet should be kill'd
> Under the shelter of so broad a shield.
> This is that hat whose very sight did win ye
> To laugh and clap as though the devil were in ye.
> As then for Nokes, so now I hope you'll be
> So dull to laugh once more for love of me.

The jest "of the other house's making" is said to have occurred in May 1670, while the Court was at Dover to receive the King's sister, the beautiful Duchess of Orleans. The reception of her royal highness was attended with much pomp and gaiety—the Duke's company of actors playing Shadwell's *Sullen Lovers*, and Caryl's *Sir Solomon, or the Cautious Coxcomb*, before the Duchess and her suite. One of the characters in Caryl's comedy is that of Sir Arthur Addle, a bawling fop, played by Nokes with a reality of action and manner then unsurpassed upon the stage. The dress of the French attending the Duchess, and present at the performance of the plays, included an excessively short laced scarlet or blue coat, with a broad waist-

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belt, which Nokes took care to laugh at, by wearing a still shorter coat of the same character, to which the Duke of Monmouth added a sword and belt from his own side, so that he looked, as old Downes the prompter assures us, more like a dressed-up ape, or a quiz on the French, than Sir Arthur Addle. The jest took at once, King Charles and his whole Court falling into an excess of laughter as soon as he appeared upon the stage, and the French showing their chagrin at the personality and folly of the imitation. The sword, which the Duke had buckled on the actor with his own hands, was kept by Nokes to his dying day.

It was in the character of Almahide in *The Conquest of Granada*, and while wearing her broad-brimmed hat and waist-belt in the prologue to the same play, that Charles became more than ever enamoured of Nelly. A satirist of the time has expressed the result of the performance in a couplet not wholly destitute of force :

> There Hart's and Rowley's souls she did ensnare,
> And made a King a rival to a player ;—

while Granville, who enjoyed the friendship of Waller, and lived to be the patron of Pope, has told the result in his poem called *The Progress of Beauty :*

> Granada lost, behold her pomps restor'd,
> And Almahide again by Kings adored.

An effect from a stage performance which some still live to remember, when it found a parallel in the passion which George IV., when Prince of

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Wales, evinced for Mrs. Robinson, while playing the part of Perdita in *A Winter's Tale*. What a true name is Perdita indeed for such a fate, and what a lesson may a young actress learn from the story of poor Mrs. Robinson, when told, as I have heard it told, by her grave in Old Windsor churchyard! Nor is Nelly's story without its moral—and now that we have got her from the purlieus of Drury Lane, and the contaminations of the green-room,—for the part of Almahide was her last performance on the stage,—we shall find her true to the King, and evincing in her own way more good than we should have expected to have found from so bad a bringing up.

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CHAPTER IV.

PERSONAL CHARACTER OF KING CHARLES II.

THE character of King Charles II. has been drawn with care and skill by several writers of distinguished reputation to whom he was known: by the great Lord Clarendon; by the Marquess of Halifax; by the Duke of Buckingham; by Evelyn and Sir William Temple; by Burnet, Dryden, and Roger North. Lord Clarendon had been acquainted with him from his boyhood, and had been his principal adviser for many years; Halifax had been his minister; Buckingham had received distinguished marks of favour at his hands; Evelyn not only frequented his Court, but had often conversed with him on matters of moment, and was intimate with many who knew him well; Temple had been his ambassador; Burnet had spoken to him with a freedom which nothing but his pastoral character would have sanctioned; Dryden was his Poet Laureate; and North added

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to his own his brother the Lord Keeper's experience of the King's character. From such writers as these, and with the aid of such incidental illustrations as a lengthened interest in the subject will supply, I propose to draw the portraiture of the King, using, where such fidelity is requisite, the very words of the authorities I employ.

His personal appearance was remarkable. He was five feet ten inches in height, and well made, with an expression of countenance somewhat fierce, and a great voice.[1] He was, says Saville, an illustrious exception to all the common rules of physiognomy; for, with a most saturnine, harsh countenance, he was both of a merry and merciful disposition. His eyes were large and fine; and his face so swarthy, that Monck, before the Restoration, used to toast him as "the black boy."[2] "Is this like me?" he said to Riley, who had just completed his portrait; "then, odds fish, I am an ugly fellow." Riley, however, must have done him an injustice; certainly, at all events, he is not an ugly fellow on the canvas of Lely, in the miniatures of Cooper, the sculpture of Gibbons, or the coins of Simon.

He lived a Deist, but did not care to think on the subject of religion, though he died professedly a Roman Catholic. His father had been severe with him, and once, while at sermon at St. Mary's in Oxford, had struck him on the head with his staff for laughing at some of the ladies sitting

[1] Evelyn, ed. 1850, ii. 207.
[2] Hinton's *Memoirs*, p. 29.

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opposite to him.[1] Later in life the ill-bred familiarity of the Scottish divines had given him a distaste for Presbyterian discipline, while the heats and animosities between the members of the Established Church and the Nonconformists with which his reign commenced made him think indifferently of both. His religion was that of a young prince in his warm blood, whose inquiries were applied more to discover arguments against belief than in its favour. The wits about his Court, who found employment in laughing at Scripture—

All by the King's example liv'd and lov'd—

delighted in turning to ridicule what the preachers said in their sermons before him, and in this way induced him to look upon the clergy as a body of men who had compounded a religion for their own advantage.[2] So strongly did this feeling take root in him, that he at length resigned himself to sleep at sermon-time—not even South or Barrow having the art to keep him awake. In one of these half-hours of sleep when in chapel, he is known to have missed, doubtless with regret, the gentle reproof of South to Lauderdale during a general somnolency:—"My lord, my lord, you snore so loud you will wake the King."

He loved ease and quiet; and it was said, not untruly, that there was as much of laziness as of love in all those hours he passed among his

[1] Dr. Lake's *Diary*, p. 26.
[2] Clarendon's *Life*, ed. 1826, iii. 3.

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Nell Gwynne.

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mistresses. Few things, remarked Burnet,[1] ever went near his heart. It was a trouble to him to think. *Unthinkingness*, indeed, was said by Halifax to be one of his characteristics[2]—and

Unthinking Charles, ruled by unthinking thee,

is a line in Lord Rochester. *Sauntering* is an epithet applied to him by Sheffield, Saville, and Wilmot. He chose rather to be eclipsed than to be troubled, to receive a pension from France rather than ask his Parliament for subsidies.

His affection for his children was worthy of a better man. He loved the Duke of Monmouth with the fondness of a partial parent, and forgave him more than once for injuries, almost amounting to crimes of magnitude, personal and political. The Duke of Grafton, one of his sons by the Duchess of Cleveland, he loved "on the score of the sea,"[3] and for the frankness of his nature. His queen's manners and society he never could have liked, though his letter to Lord Clarendon, written from Portsmouth, upon her first arrival, is ardent in passion, and might have been held to promise the most constant affection for her person.[4] He grew at last to believe that she never could

[1] Burnet, ed. 1823, ii. 469.
[2] Halifax, p. 4.
[3] Pepys's *Tangier Diary*, ii. 36.
[4] See it among the *Lansdowne MSS.* (1236, f. 124) in the British Museum. It is not fit to print. [The one sentence in the letter which might possibly shock our wonderful twentieth-century purists is that referring to the Queen's feverish condition; it is couched in orthodox medical language.]

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bring him an heir,[1] an opinion in which he was confirmed by the people about him; but, anxious as he certainly was for another wife, he rejected with scorn a proposition that was made to him to send her away in disguise to a distant region. His steadiness to his brother, though it may, and indeed must, in a great measure be accounted for on selfish principles, had at least, as Fox remarks, a strong resemblance to virtue.[2] Prince Rupert he looked upon, not unjustly, as a madman.[3] If he was slow to reward and willing to forgive, he was not prone to forget. His secret service expenses record many payments, and at all periods, to the several branches of the Penderells, to whom he was indebted for his preservation after the battle of Worcester.[4]

He lived beloved, and died lamented, by a very large portion of his people. What helped to endear him has been happily expressed by Waller:

> —— the first English born
> That has the crown of these three kingdoms worn.

Then, the way in which he was seen in St. James's Park feeding his ducks;[5] or in the Mall playing a manly game with great skill;[6] or at

[1] Clarendon's *Life*, ed. 1826, iii. 60.
[2] Fox's *James II.*, p. 70.
[3] Pepys's *Tangier Diary*, ii. 36.
[4] Printed for the Camden Society. Mr. Macaulay says, harshly enough—"Never was there a mind on which both services and injuries left such faint and transitory impressions."
Cibber's *Apology*, 8vo, 1740, p. 26.
[6] Waller's poem "On St. James's Park."

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the two theatres encouraging English authors, and commending English actors and actresses, added to his popularity. He really mixed with his subjects; and though a standing army was first established in his reign, it was needed more for his throne than for his person.

He did not study or care for the state which most of his predecessors before him had assumed, and was fond of dropping the formality of a sovereign for the easy character of a companion. He had lived, when in exile, upon a footing of equality with his banished nobles, and had partaken freely and promiscuously in the pleasures and frolics by which they had endeavoured to sweeten adversity. He was led in this way to let distinction and ceremony fall to the ground, as useless and foppish, and could not even on premeditation, it is said, act for a moment the part of a king either at parliament or council, either in words or gesture. When he attended the House of Lords, he would descend from the throne and stand by the fire, drawing a crowd about him that broke up all the regularity and order of the place. In a very little time he would have gone round the House, and have spoken to every man that he thought worth speaking to.[1] He carried his dogs to the council table—

[1] Burnet, ed. 1823, i. 472-3. In his speech in the House of Commons, March 1, 1661, he says: "In a word, I know most of your faces and names, and can never hope to find better men in your places."

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His very dog at council board
Sits grave and wise as any lord,[1]

and allowed them to lie in his bedchamber, where he would often suffer them to pup and give suck, much to the disgust of Evelyn, and of many who resided at Court.[2] His very speeches to his parliament contain traits of his personal character. "The mention of my wife's arrival," he says, "puts me in mind to desire you to put that compliment upon her, that her entrance into the town may be with more decency than the ways will now suffer it to be, and for that purpose I pray you would quickly pass such laws as are before you, in order to the amending those ways, and that she may not find Whitehall surrounded by water."[3] Nothing but his character, as Sir Robert Walpole observed of Sir William Yonge, could keep down his parts, and nothing but his parts support his character.

His mistresses were as different in their humours as in their looks. He did not care to choose for himself, so that, as Halifax observes, it was re-

[1] Lord Rochester's *Poems*, 1697, p. 150. [Cf. also Pepys's *Diary* (Sept. 4, 1667). Like his father, Charles II. was fond of dogs, and the "King Charles's spaniel" became quite a fashionable breed. In *Notes and Queries* (7th ser., vii. 26) are three quaint advertisements for dogs stolen from him, reprinted from the *Mercurius Publicus* and the *Intelligencer*.]

[2] Evelyn, vol. ii. p. 207, ed. 1850. Charles was fond of animals and natural history. In the *Works Accounts at Whitehall for* 1667-8, I observe a payment for "the posts whereon the king's bees stand."

[3] Speech, March 1, 1661-2. See the allusion explained in my *Handbook for London*, art. "Whitehall."

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solved generally by others whom he should have in his arms as well as whom he should have in his councils. Latterly he lived under the traditional influence of his old engagements; and though he had skill enough to suspect, he had wit enough not to care.[1] His passion for Miss Stewart, as I have already said, was a stronger feeling of attachment than he is thought to have entertained for anybody else.[2]

His understanding was quick and lively; but he had little reading, and that tending to his pleasures more than to instruction. He had read men rather than books. The Duke of Buckingham happily characterised the two brothers in a conversation with Burnet. "The King," he said, "could see things if he would, and the Duke would see things if he could."[3] Nor was the observation of Tom Killigrew, made to the King himself in Cowley's hearing, without its point. This privileged wit, after telling the King the ill state of his affairs, was pleased to suggest a way to help all. "There is," says he, "a good honest able man that I could name, whom if your majesty would employ, and command to see things well executed, all things would soon be mended, and this is one Charles Stewart, who now spends his time in employing his lips about the Court, and hath no other employment; but if you would give him this employment, he were the fittest man in the world to perform it."[4]

[1] Halifax's *Character*, p. 21.
[2] Clarendon's *Life*, ed. 1826, iii. 61.
[3] Burnet, ed. 1823, i. 288. [4] Pepys, Dec. 8, 1666.

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He had what Sheffield called the *foible* of his family, to be easily imposed upon; for, as Clarendon truly remarks, it was the unhappy fate of the Stewart family to trust too much on all occasions to others.[1] To such an extent did he carry unnecessary confidence, that he would sign papers without inquiring what they were about.[2]

He drew well himself,[3] was fond of mathematics, fortification, and shipping; knew the secrets of many empirical medicines, passed many hours in his laboratory, and in the very month in which he died was running a process for fixing mercury.[4] The Observatory at Greenwich and the Mathematical School at Christ's Hospital are enduring instances of his regard for science.

He had all the hereditary love of the Stewarts for poetry and poets, and in this respect was certainly different from George II., who considered a poet in the light of a mechanic.[5] He carried *Hudibras* about in his pocket,[6] protected its publication by his royal warrant, but allowed its author to starve. Nor was this from want of admiration, but from

[1] Clarendon's *Life*, ed. 1826, iii. 63.
[2] Burnet, ed. 1823, i. 417.
[3] Walpole's *Anecdotes*, ed. Wornum, p. 427.
[4] Burnet, ed. 1823, ii. 254. Among the satires attributed to Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, is one on Charles II., called "The Cabin Boy." [On Jan. 15, 1668-9, Pepys chronicles a visit to the King's laboratory: "Then down with Lord Brouncker to Sir R. Murray into the king's little elaboratory under his closet, a pretty place, and there saw a great many chymical glasses and things, but understood none of them."]
[5] Lord Chesterfield's *Works*, ed. Lord Mahon, ii. 441.
[6] Dennis's *Reflections on Pope's Essay on Criticism*, p. 23.

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indolence. Patronage had been a trouble to him. The noble song of Shirley—

The glories of our blood and state,

was often sung to him by old Bowman, and, while he enjoyed the poetry, he could have cared but little for the moral grandeur which pervades it. He suggested the *Medal* to Dryden as a subject for a poem while walking in the Mall. "If I was a poet," he said, "and I think I am poor enough to be one, I would write a poem on such a subject in the following manner."—Dryden took the hint, carried his poem to the King, and had a hundred broad pieces for it.[1] A good new comedy, we are told by Dennis, took the next place in his list of likings immediately after his last new mistress. In points connected with the stage he was even more at home than in matters of poetry, insomuch that the particular differences, pretensions, or complaints of the actors were generally ended by the King's personal command or decision.[2] This, however, he would at times carry to excess, and it has been even said that "he would hear anybody against anybody." One of his latest acts was to call the attention of the poet Crowne to the Spanish play, *No puede ser; or, It cannot be*, and to command him to write a comedy on a somewhat similar foundation. To this suggestion it is that we owe the good old comedy of *Sir Courtly Nice*.[3]

[1] Spence's *Anecdotes*, p. 171.
[2] Cibber's *Apology*, ed. 1740, p. 75.
[3] Crowne's Preface to *Sir Courtly Nice*, 4to, 1685.

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He hated flattery,[1] was perfectly accessible, would stop and talk with Hobbes, or walk through the Park with Evelyn, or any other favourite. Steele remembered to have seen him more than once leaning on D'Urfey's shoulder, and humming over a song with him.[2] Hume blames him for not preserving Otway from his sad end; but Otway died in the next reign, more from accident than neglect.

His passion for music (he preferred the violin to the viol) is not ill illustrated in the well-known jingle—

> Four-and-twenty fiddlers all in a row,
> And there was fiddle-fiddle, and twice fiddle-fiddle, etc.,

written on his enlargement of his band of fiddlers to four-and-twenty,—his habit, while at his meals, of having, according to the French mode, twenty-four violins playing before him;[3] or by his letters written during his exile. "We pass our time as well as people can do," he observes, "that have no more money, for we dance and play as if we had taken the Plate fleet;"[4] "Pray get me pricked down," he adds in another, "as many new corrants and sarabands and other little dances as you can,

[1] Temple's *Works*, ed. 1770, ii. 409.

[2] *The Guardian*. [No. 67; dated May 28, 1713. The paper was written by Addison in the character of one of D'Urfey's old friends. It is unlikely that either Addison or Steele could have personally witnessed the occurrence.]

[3] Anthony à Wood's *Life*, ed. Bliss, 8vo p. 70.

[4] *Mis. Aulica*, p. 117.

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and bring them with you, for I have got a small fiddler that does not play ill."[1]

Like others of his race, like James I. and James V. of Scotland, like his father and his grandfather, he was occasionally a poet. A song of his composition is certainly characteristic of his way of life :—

I pass all my hours in a shady old grove,
But I live not the day when I see not my love;
I survey every walk now my Phillis is gone,
And sigh when I think we were there all alone;
O then, 'tis O then, that I think there's no hell
Like loving, like loving too well.

But each shade and each conscious bow'r when I find,
Where I once have been happy, and she has been kind;
When I see the print left of her shape on the green,
And imagine the pleasure may yet come again;
O then 'tis I think that no joys are above
The pleasures of love.

While alone to myself I repeat all her charms,
She I love may be lock'd in another man's arms,
She may laugh at my cares, and so false she may be,
To say all the kind things she before said to me:
O then, 'tis O then, that I think there's no hell
Like loving too well.

But when I consider the truth of her heart,
Such an innocent passion, so kind without art;
I fear I have wronged her, and hope she may be
So full of true love to be jealous to me:
And then 'tis I think that no joys are above
The pleasures of love.[2]

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[1] Ellis's *Letters* (2nd series), iii. p. 376, and *Mis. Aul.*, p. 155.

[2] From *Choice Ayres, Songs, etc.*, 1676, folio. See also Roger North's *Memoirs of Musick*, 4to, 1846, p. 104; Hawkins's *History of Music*, v. 447; and Park's ed. of Walpole's *Royal and Noble Authors*, i. 154.

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That he understood foreign affairs better than all his councils and counsellors put together was the repeated remark of the Lord Keeper Guilford. In his exile he had acquired either a personal acquaintance with most of the eminent statesmen in Europe, or else from such as could instruct him he had received their characters :—and this knowledge, the Lord Keeper would continue, he perpetually improved by conversing with men of quality and ambassadors, whom he would sift, and by what he obtained from them ("possibly drunk as well as sober"), would serve himself one way or other. "When they sought," his lordship added, "to sift him—who, to give him his due, was but too open—he failed not to make his best of them."[1]

His love of wine was the common failing of his age. The couplet which I shall have occasion hereafter to include among his happy replies :

> Good store of good claret supplies everything,
> And the man that is drunk is as great as a king,

affords no ill notion of the feeling current at Whitehall. When the Duke of York, after dinner, asked Henry Saville if he intended to invite the King to the business of the day, Saville wondered what he meant, and incurred the displeasure of the Duke by continuing the King in the belief that hard drinking was the business before them.[2]

His great anxiety was the care of his health thinking it, perhaps, more reconcilable with his

[1] North, ed. 1826, ii. 102.
[2] Lady R. Russell's *Letters*, ed. Miss Berry, p. 177.

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pleasures than he really found it. He rose early, walked generally three or four hours a day by his watch, and when he pulled it out, skilful men, it is said, would make haste with what they had to say to him. He walked so rapidly with what Teonge calls "his wonted large pace,"[1] that it was a trouble, as Burnet observes, for others to keep up with him. This rapid walk gives a sting to the saying of Shaftesbury, that "he would *leisurely* walk his Majesty out of his dominions,"[2] while it explains his advice to his nephew, Prince George of Denmark, when he complained to Charles of growing fat since his marriage, "Walk with me, hunt with my brother, and do justice on my niece, and you will not be fat."[3]

His ordinary conversation—and much of his time was passed in "discoursing,"[4]—hovered too frequently between profanity and indecency, and in its familiarity was better adapted to his condition before he was restored than afterwards. Yet it had withal many fascinations of which the best talker might be proud—possessing a certain softness of manner that placed his hearers at ease, and sent them away enamoured with what he said.[5] When he thought fit to unbend entirely, he exhibited great quickness of conception, much pleasantness of wit, with great variety of knowledge, more observation and truer judgment of men than one would have

[1] Teonge's *Diary*, p. 232.
[2] Sprat's *Account of the Rye-House Plot*.
[3] Anthony à Wood's *Life*, ed. Bliss, p. 260.
[4] North's *Lives*, ed. 1826, ii. [5] Burnet, ed. 1823, ii. 467.

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imagined by so careless and easy a manner as was natural to him in all he said or did.[1] Such at least is the written opinion of Sir William Temple. His speech to La Belle Stewart, who resisted all his importunities,—that he hoped he should live to see her "ugly and willing";[2]—his letter to his sister on hearing of her pregnancy,[3] and his speech to his wife, "You lie: confess and be hanged,"[4] must be looked upon in connection with the outspoken language of his age—an age in which young women, even of the higher classes, conversed without circumspection and modesty, and frequently met at taverns and common eating-houses.[5]

"If writers be just to the memory of King Charles II.," says Dryden, addressing Lord Halifax, "they cannot deny him to have been an exact knower of mankind, and a perfect distinguisher of their talents." "It is true," he continues, "his necessities often forced him to vary his counsellors and counsels, and sometimes to employ such persons in the management of his affairs who were rather fit for his present purpose than satisfactory to his judgment; but where it was choice in him, not compulsion, he was master of too much good sense to delight in heavy conversation; and, whatever his favourites of state might be, yet those of his affection were men of wit."[6]

[1] Temple, ed. 1770, ii. 408.
[2] Lord Dartmouth's note in Burnet, ed. 1823, i. 436.
[3] Dalrymple's *Memoirs*, ed. 1773, Appendix, p. 21.
[4] Pepys.
[5] Clarendon's *Life*, ed. 1826, i. 358.
[6] Dryden—Dedication of *King Arthur*, 4to, 1691.

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He was an admirable teller of a story, and loved to talk over the incidents of his life to every new face that came about him. His stay in Scotland, his escape from Worcester, and the share he had in the war of Paris, in carrying messages from the one side to the other, were his common topics. He went over these in a very graceful manner, but so often and so copiously, says Burnet, that all those who had been long accustomed to them were soon weary, and usually withdrew, so that he often began them in a full audience, and before he had done there were not above four or five left about him. But this general unwillingness to listen is contradicted by Sheffield, who observes that many of his ministers, not out of flattery, but for the pleasure of hearing it, affected an ignorance of what they had heard him relate ten times before, treating a story of his telling as a good comedy that bears being seen often, if well acted. This love of talking made him, it is said, fond of strangers, who hearkened to his stories and went away as in a rapture at such uncommon condescension in a king; while the sameness in telling caused Lord Rochester to observe, that "he wondered to see a man have so good a memory as to repeat the same story without losing the least circumstance, and yet not remember that he had told it to the same persons the very day before."[1]

He was undisturbed by libels; enjoying the severities of Wilmot, enduring and not resenting

[1] Burnet, ed. 1823, i. 458.

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the bitter personalities of Sheffield.[1] To have been angry about such matters had been a trouble; he therefore let them alone, banishing Wilmot only for a time for a libel which he had given him on himself, and rewarding Sheffield for a satire unsurpassed for boldness in an age of lampoons. He was compared to Nero, who sung while Rome was burning, and pardoned the malice of the wit in the satire of the comparison. He loved a laugh at Court as much as Nokes or Tony Leigh did upon the stage.

> Yet he would laugh at his best friends, and be
> Just as good company as Nokes or Leigh.[2]

Few indeed escaped his wit, and rather than not laugh he would turn the laugh upon himself.

Words or promises went very easily from him,[3] and his memory was only good in such matters as affection or caprice might chance to determine. Had he been less "unthinking," we should have had an epic from the muse of Dryden, "but being encouraged only with fair words from King Charles II.," writes the great poet, "my little salary ill paid, and no prospect of a future subsistence, I was thus discouraged in the beginning of my attempt." If we lost *King Arthur*, we gained *Absalom and*

[1] Lord Rochester to Saville, relative to Mulgrave's *Essay on Satire*. (Malone's *Life of Dryden*, p. 134.) See also Burnet, ed. 1823, i. 433.

[2] Mulgrave's *Essay on Satire*. Mr. Bolton Corney, in vol. iii. p. 162 of *Notes and Queries* [1st series], has in a most unanswerable manner vindicated Mulgrave's claim to the authorship of this satire.

[3] Burnet, ii. 466.

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Achitophel. Thus discouraged, Dryden took to temporary subjects, nor let us regret the chance that drove him from his heroic poem.

Among the most reprehensible of the minor frailties of his life, for which he must be considered personally responsible, was his squandering on his mistresses the £70,000 voted by the House for a monument to his father, and his thrusting the Countess of Castlemaine into the place of a Lady of the Bedchamber to his newly-married wife. The excuse for the former fault, that his father's grave was unknown, was silly in the extreme, and has since been proved to be without foundation; while his letter in reply to the remonstrance of Lord Clarendon, not to appoint his mistress to a place of honour in the household of his wife, assigns no reason for such a step, while it holds out a threat of everlasting enmity should Clarendon continue to oppose his will.[1]

One of his favourite amusements was fishing, and the Thames at Datchet one of his places of resort. Lord Rochester alludes to his passion for the sport in one of his minor poems,[2] and among his household expenses is an allowance to his

[1] See it in Lister's *Life of Clarendon*, iii. 202. [The original is in the British Museum, *Lansdowne MS.*, 1236, f. 121; cf. *Stowe MS.* 154, f. 16. Charles's ferocity in this matter has been justly likened to that of a wild boar showing his tusks: see the admirable article on the Duchess of Cleveland (*s. v.* Villiers) in *Dict. Nat. Biog.*]

[2] *State Poems*, 8vo, 1697, p. 43; Reresby's *Memoirs*, 8vo, 1735, p. 100. Lord Rochester's poem, in a MS. of the time, is headed "Flatfoot, the Gudgeon Taker." (MS. in posses-

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cormorant keeper for his repairing yearly into the north parts of England "to take haggard cormorants for the King's disport in fishing."[1] His fancy for his ducks was long perpetuated in the public accounts, as Berenger observed, when a century after he was making his inquiries at the Mews for his *History of Horsemanship*. Struck by the constant introduction of a charge for hempseed, he was led at last to inquire for what purpose the seed was wanted. That none was used was at once admitted, but the charge had been regularly made since the reign of Charles II., and that seemed sufficient reason for its continuance in the Mews accounts.[2] Many an abuse has been perpetuated on no better grounds.

Such was Charles II.:

> Great Pan who wont to chase the fair
> And loved the spreading oak;[3]

and such are the materials from which David Hume and Sir Walter Scott, Mr. Fox and Mr. Macaulay, have drawn in part their characters of

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sion of R. M. Milnes, Esq., M.P. afterwards Lord Houghton, ii. 240.) ["The Royal Angler" is the title of one of Rochester's satires (*Works*, ed. 1709, p. 149); it refers to Charles gudgeon-fishing at Datchet, and is presumably identical with the poem in Lord Houghton's MS.] [At Windsor,] 1 July 1679.—"Little was done all day but going a fishing. At night the Duchess of Portsmouth came. In the morning I was with the King at Mrs. Nell's."—Henry Sidney, Lord Romney's *Diary*, i. 20.

[1] *Audit Office Enrolments* (MSS.), vi. 326.

[2] Nichols's *Tatler*, 8vo, 1786, iii. 361.

[3] Addison, "To Sir Godfrey Kneller."

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St. James's Park: Charles II. and Court going towards the Decoy. *From a print by S. Masell.*

[*To face p.* 80.

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the King. But there are other materials for a true understanding of the man :

A merry monarch, scandalous and poor,

and these are his sayings, which Walpole loved to repeat, and of which I have made a collection in the following chapter.

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CHAPTER V.

THE SAYINGS OF KING CHARLES II.

"I HAVE made a collection," said Walpole, "of the witty sayings of Charles II., and a collection of *bon-mots* by people who only said one witty thing in the whole course of their lives."[1] Both these collections are, it is believed, unfortunately lost. The former deficiency I have, however, attempted to supply (I fear imperfectly) in the following chapter; regarding remarkable sayings as among the very best illustrations of individual character and manners.

The satirical epitaph written upon King Charles II. at his own request,[2] by his witty favourite the Earl of Rochester, is said to be not more severe than it is just:

> Here lies our sovereign lord the King,
> Whose word no man relies on;

[1] *Walpoliana*, i. 58.

[2] So Sir Walter Scott in *Misc. Prose Works*, xxiv. 171—but upon what authority?

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Who never said a foolish thing,
And never did a wise one.

How witty was the reply! "The matter," he observed, "was easily accounted for—his discourse was his own, his actions were his ministry's."[1]

A good story of the King and the Lord Mayor of London at a Guildhall dinner has been preserved to us in *The Spectator*. The King's easy manner, and Sir Robert Viner's due sense of City hospitality, carried the dignitary of Guildhall into certain familiarities not altogether graceful at any time, and quite out of character at a public table. The King, who understood very well how to extricate himself from difficulties of this description, gave a hint to the company to avoid ceremony, and stole off to his coach, which stood ready for him in Guildhall Yard. But the Mayor liked his Majesty's company too well, and was grown so intimate that he pursued the merry sovereign, and, catching him fast by the hand, cried out with a vehement oath and accent, "Sir, you shall stay and take t'other bottle." "The airy monarch," continues the narrator of the anecdote, "looked kindly at him over his shoulder, and with a smile and graceful air (for I saw him at the time and do now), repeated this line of the old song:

He that's drunk is as great as a king,[2]

[1] Hume's *History of England*, viii. 212.

[2] In Tate's *Cuckold's Haven*, 4to, 1685, is the following couplet:

"Good store of good claret supplies everything,
And the man thati s drunk is as great as a king."

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and immediately turned back and complied with his landlord."[1] This famous anecdote is importantly illustrated by a letter from the Countess-Dowager of Sunderland to her brother, Henry Sidney, written five years after the mayoralty of Sir Robert Viner.[2] The King had supped with the Lord Mayor; and the Aldermen on the occasion drank the King's health over and over upon their knees, wishing every one hanged and damned that would not serve him with their lives and fortunes. But this was not all. As his guards were drunk, or said to be so, they would not trust his Majesty with so insecure an escort, but attended him themselves to Whitehall, and, as the lady-writer observes, "all went merry out of the King's cellar." So much was this accessibility of manner in the King acceptable to his people, that the Mayor and his brethren waited next day at Whitehall to return thanks to the King and Duke for the honour they had done them, and the Mayor, confirmed by this reception, was changed from an ill to a well affected subject.

It was an age of nicknames—the King himself was known as "Old Rowley," in allusion to an ill-favoured but famous horse in the Royal Mews. Nor was the cognomen at all disagreeable to him. Mrs. Holford, a young lady much admired by the King, was in her apartments singing a satirical ballad upon *Old Rowley the King*, when he knocked

[1] *Spectator*, No. 462.

[2] Letter of March 12, 1679-80, in Henry Sidney's *Diary*, etc., i. 300.

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at her door. Upon her asking who was there, the King, with his usual good humour, replied, "Old Rowley himself, madam."[1] Hobbes he called "the Bear." "Here comes the Bear to be baited," was his remark, as soon as he saw the great philosopher surrounded by the wits who rejoiced in his conversation.[2] A favourite yacht received from him the name of *Fubbs*—in honour of the Duchess of Portsmouth, who was become notably plump in her person.[3] The Queen he called "a bat," in allusion to her short, broad figure, her swarthy complexion, and the projection of her upper lip from a protuberant foretooth.[4]

His politeness was remarkable, and he could convey a rebuke in the style of a wit and a gentleman. When Penn stood before him with his hat on—the King put off his. "Friend Charles," said Penn, "why dost thou not keep on thy hat?" "'Tis the custom of this place," replied the monarch, "that only one person should be covered at a time."[5] The well-known English schoolmaster, Busby, excused himself to the King for wearing his hat in his Majesty's presence in his own school at Westminster: "If I were seen without my hat,

[1] Granger's *Biog. Hist.*, ed. 1775, iv. 50.
[2] Aubrey's *Life of Hobbes*. See also *Tom Brown*, i. 174, "King Charles II. compared old Hobbes to a bear."
[3] Hawkins's *History of Music*, iv. 359, n.

"The lean provokes me with her naughty rubs,
But if she's plump, 'tis then my *pretty Fubbs*."
Poems collected by N. Tate, 1685, p. 35.

[4] Lord Dartmouth in Burnet, ed. 1823, i. 299.
[5] Butler's *Hudibras*, ed. Grey, i. 376.

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even in the presence of your Majesty, the boys' respect for me would certainly be lessened." The excuse, such is the tradition at Westminster, was at once admitted, and Busby wore his hat before the King as he still is seen to wear it in his portrait in the Bodleian.

When reprimanded by one of his courtiers for leading or interlarding his discourse with unnecessary oaths, he defended himself by saying, "Your Martyr swore twice more than ever I did."[1] And, in allusion again to his father's character, he observed to Lord Keeper Guilford, who was musing somewhat pensively on the woolsack, "My Lord, be of good comfort, I will not forsake my friends as my father did."[2] To Reresby he remarked, "Do not trouble yourself; I will stick by you and my old friends, for if I do not I shall have nobody stick to me;" and on another occasion he said to the same memorialist, "Let them do what they will, I will never part with any officer at the request of either House; my father lost his head by such compliance, but as for me, I intend to die another way."[3]

While Prince, seeing a soldier of the Parliament —one of Cromwell's officers, and one active against the King—led through the streets of Oxford as a prisoner, he asked what they designed to do with him. They said they were carrying him to the

[1] *The Apology of the Reverend John Watson for his conduct, yearly, on the 30th of January*, 8vo, [1755,] p. 34, and Malone's *Shakespeare*, by Boswell, iii. 235.
[2] North, i. 387.
[3] Reresby's *Memoirs*, ed. 1735, pp. 103, 105.

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King, his father; "Carry him rather to the gallows and hang him up," was the reply; "for if you carry him to my father he'll surely pardon him."[1] This was assuredly not cruelty in Charles—but merely an odd specimen of his ever-playful temperament.

He was altogether in favour of extempore preaching, and was unwilling to listen to the delivery of a written sermon. Patrick excused himself from a chaplaincy, "finding it very difficult to get a sermon without book."[2] On one occasion the King asked the famous Stillingfleet, "how it was that he always reads his sermons before him, when he was informed that he always preached without book elsewhere?" Stillingfleet answered something about the awe of so noble a congregation, the presence of so great and wise a prince, with which the King himself was very well contented. "But pray," continued Stillingfleet, "will your Majesty give me leave to ask you a question? Why do you read your speeches when you can have none of the same reasons?" "Why truly, doctor," replied the King, "your question is a very pertinent one, and so will be my answer. I have asked the two Houses so often and for so much money, that I am ashamed to look them in the face."[3] This "slothful way of preaching," for so the King called it, had arisen during the civil wars; and Monmouth, when Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, in compliance with the order of the

[1] Dr. Lake's *Diary* in *Camden Miscellany*, vol. i.
[2] Patrick's *Autobiography*, p. 66.
[3] *Richardsoniana*, p. 89.

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King, directed a letter to the University that the practice of reading sermons should be wholly laid aside.[1]

When Cosin, Bishop of Durham, reminded the King that he had presumed to recommend Sancroft and Sudbury as chaplains to his Majesty, the King replied, "My Lord, recommend two more such to me, and I will return you any four I have for them."[2]

One of his replies to Sir Christopher Wren is characteristic both of the monarch and his architect. The King was inspecting the new apartments which Wren had built for him in his hunting-palace at Newmarket, and observed that "he thought the rooms too low." Sir Christopher, who was small in height, walked round them, and looking up and about him, said, "I think, and it please your Majesty, they are high enough." Charles, squatting down to his architect's height, and creeping about in this whimsical posture, cried, "Ay, Sir Christopher, I think they are high enough."[3]

The elder Richardson was fond of telling a characteristic story of the King and kingly honour. A cutpurse, or pickpocket, with as much effrontery of face as dexterity of finger, had got into the Drawing-room on the King's birthday, dressed like a gentleman, and was detected by the King himself taking a gold snuff-box out of a certain Earl's

[1] Wilkins's *Concilia*, iv. 594.
[2] Dr. Lake's *Diary* in *Camden Miscellany*, vol. i.
[3] *Richardsoniana*, p. 187.

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Sr Peter Lely Pinx.

Nell Gwyn.

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pocket. The rogue, who saw his sovereign's eye upon him, put his finger to his nose, and made a sign to the King with a wink to say nothing. Charles took the hint, and, watching the Earl, enjoyed his feeling first in one pocket and then in another for his missing box. The King now called the nobleman to him. "You need not give yourself," he said, "any more trouble about it, my Lord, your box is gone; I am myself an accomplice:—I could not help it, I was made a confidant."[1]

Of his graver and deeper remarks Dryden has preserved a specimen. "I remember a saying," writes the poet, "of King Charles II. on Sir Matthew Hale (who was, doubtless, an uncorrupted and upright man), that his servants were sure to be cast on any trial which was heard before him; not that he thought the Judge was possibly to be bribed, but that his integrity might be too scrupulous; and that the causes of the Crown were always suspicious when the privileges of subjects were concerned."[2] The wisdom of the remark as respects Sir Matthew Hale is confirmed by Roger North. "If one party was a courtier," says North, "and well dressed, and the other a sort of puritan, with a black cap and plain clothes, Hale insensibly thought the justice of the cause with the latter."[3] Nor has it passed without the censure of Johnson. "A judge," said the great doctor, "may be partial

[1] *Richardsoniana*, p. 103.
[2] Dryden's *Prose Works*, ed. Malone, iv. 156.
[3] North, i. 119.

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otherwise than to the Crown ; we have seen judges partial to the Populace." [1]

His easy, gentlemanlike way of expressing disapprobation is exemplified in a saying to which I have already had occasion to refer. "Is that like me?" he asked Riley the painter, to whom he had sat for his portrait; "then, odds fish! I am an ugly fellow." [2]

When told that the Emperor of Morocco had made him a present of two lions and thirty ostriches, he laughed, and said he "knew nothing more proper to send by way of return than a flock of geese." [3]

Of Harrow Church, standing on a hill and visible for many miles round, he is said to have remarked that "it was the only *visible* church he knew"; [4] and when taken to see a fellow climb up the outside of a church to its very pinnacle and there stand on his head, he offered him, on coming down, a patent to prevent any one doing it but himself. [5]

"Pray," he said at the theatre, while observing the grim looks of the murderers in *Macbeth*, "pray what is the reason that we never see a rogue in a play, but, odds fish! they always clap him on a black periwig, when it is well known one of the

[1] *Boswell*, ed. Croker, ed. 1848, p. 448.
[2] Walpole's *Anecdotes*.
[3] Reresby's *Memoirs*, ed. 1735, p. 132.
[4] *Remarks on Squire* [William] *Ayre's . . . Life . . . of Mr. Pope*, 1745, 12mo, p. 12 [it is signed J. H., and attributed to Sir John Hill].
[5] Horace Walpole, in *Gentleman's Magazine* for January 1848.

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greatest rogues in England always wears a fair one?" The allusion was, it is asserted, to Oates, but, as I rather suspect, to Shaftesbury. The saying, however, was told by Betterton to Cibber.[1]

He was troubled with intercessions for people who were obnoxious to him; and once, when Lord Keeper Guilford was soliciting his favour on behalf of one he did not like, he observed facetiously, "It is very strange that every one of my friends should keep a tame knave."[2]

One day while the King was being shaved, his impudent barber observed to him that "he thought none of his Majesty's officers had a greater trust than he." "Oy," said the King, "how so, friend?" "Why," said the barber, "I could cut your Majesty's throat when I would." The King started up and said, "Odds fish! that very thought is treason; thou shalt shave me no more."[3] The barber of Dionysius, who had made the same remark, was crucified for his garrulity: but honest Rowley was not cruel. His loquacious barber was only dismissed. "Falsehood and cruelty," he said to Burnet, "he looked on as the greatest crimes in the sight of God."[4]

Of Woolley, afterwards Bishop of Clonfert, he observed wittily, and with great knowledge of character, that he "was a very honest man, but a very great blockhead—that he had given him a

[1] Cibber's *Apology*, ed. 1740, p. 111.
[2] North's *Lives*, ed. 1826, ii. 247.
[3] *Richardsoniana*, p. 106.
[4] Burnet, ed. 1823, ii. 169.

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living in Suffolk, swarming with Nonconformists—that he had gone from house to house and brought them all to Church—that he had made him a Bishop for his diligence; but what he could have said to the Nonconformists he could not imagine, except he believed that his nonsense suited their nonsense."[1]

On one occasion, when unable or unwilling to sleep, he was so much pleased with a passage in a sermon by South, that he laughed outright, and turning to Laurence Hyde, Lord Rochester, "Odds fish! Lory," said he, "your chaplain must be a Bishop, therefore put me in mind of him next vacancy."[2] Of Barrow, he said that "he was an unfair preacher,"[3] because, as it has been explained, he exhausted every subject and left no room for others to come after him;—but the King's allusion was made somewhat slyly to the length as well as excellence of Barrow's sermons.[4]

He said often he "was not priest-ridden: he would not venture a war nor travel again for any party."[5] Such is Burnet's story, curiously confirmed as it is by Sir Richard Bulstrode's conversation with the King on his former exile and the then condition of the country. "I," said the King, most prophetically indeed, "am weary of travelling—I am resolved to go abroad no more; but when

[1] Burnet, ed. 1823, i. 449.
[2] *Biographia Britannica*, art. "South."
[3] Life in *Biographia Britannica*.
[4] *Biographia Britannica*, art. "Barrow."
[5] Burnet, ed. 1823, i. 356.

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I am dead and gone, I know not what my brother will do. I am much afraid that when he comes to the Crown he will be obliged to travel again."[1]

He observed, in allusion to the amours of the Duke of York and the plain looks of his mistresses, that he "believed his brother had his favourites given him by his priests for penance."[2]

After taking two or three turns one morning in St. James's Park, the King, attended only by the Duke of Leeds and Lord Cromarty, walked up Constitution Hill into Hyde Park. When he was crossing the road, where Apsley House now is, the Duke of York, who had been hunting that morning on Hounslow Heath, was seen returning in his coach, escorted by a party of the Guards, who, as soon as they perceived the King, suddenly halted, and stopped the coach. The Duke being acquainted with the occasion of the halt, immediately got out, and after saluting the King, said he was greatly surprised to find his Majesty in that place, with so small an attendance, and that he thought his Majesty exposed himself to some danger. "No kind of danger, James," was the reply: "for I am sure no man in England will take away my life to make you King." The old Lord Cromarty often mentioned this anecdote to his friends.[3]

"It is better to be envied than pitied," was his observation to Lord Chancellor Clarendon.[4]

[1] Sir Richard Bulstrode's *Memoirs*, p. 424.
[2] Burnet, ed. 1823, i. 288.
[3] King's *Anecdotes of his Own Times*, p. 61.
[4] Clarendon's *Own Life*, ed. 1827, i. 412.

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"He that takes one stone from the Church takes two from the Crown," was another of his sayings preserved by Pepys.[1]

He said to Lauderdale, to "let Presbytery go, for it was not a religion for gentlemen."[2]

That "God would not damn a man for a little irregular pleasure," he observed in one of his free discourses with Burnet on points of religion.[3]

If his short characters of men were in common at all like the one that has been preserved to us of Godolphin, we have lost a good deal by the lack of reporters. Of Godolphin, when only a page at Court, he said, that "he was never *in* the way, and never *out* of the way";[4] and this was a character, says Lord Dartmouth, which Godolphin maintained to his life's end.

When told by Will Legge that the pardoning of Lord Russell would, among other things, lay an eternal obligation upon a very great and numerous family, he replied, with reason on his side, "All that is true; but it is as true, that if I do not take his life he will soon have mine."[5]

Eager for the marriage of the Princess Mary to the Prince of Orange, on being reminded of his promise to the Duke of York (to whom the match was unwelcome), that he would not dispose of the daughter without the father's consent, he replied it was true he had given his brother such a promise,

[1] Pepys, March 29, 1669.
[2] Burnet, ed. 1823, i. 184. [3] *Ibid.*, ed. 1823, ii. 23.
[4] Lord Dartmouth in Burnet, ed. 1823, ii. 240.
[5] Lord Dartmouth's note in Burnet, ed. 1823, ii. 370.

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"but, odds fish! he *must* consent."[1] After the marriage the King entered their room as soon as they were in bed, and drawing the curtains, cried out to the Prince—it is the chaplain who tells the story, an archdeacon and prebendary of Exeter, whose words I would fain quote in full—"Now, Nephew. Hey! St. George for England!"[2]

When Sancroft, dean of St. Paul's, was brought to Whitehall by Will Chiffinch, that Charles might tell him in person of his appointment to the archbishopric of Canterbury, the dean urged his unfitness for that office, and requested his Majesty to bestow it on some more worthy person. The King replied, that, "whether he would accept the Primacy or not, his Deanery was already given to Dr. Stillingfleet."[3]

When Sir John Warner turned Papist and retired to a convent, his uncle, Dr. Warner, who was one of the King's physicians, upon apprehension that Sir John might convert his property to popish uses, pressed his Majesty to order the Attorney-General to proceed at law for securing his estate to himself, as next male heir. "Sir John at present," said the King, "is one of God Almighty's fools, but it will not be long before he returns to his estate, and enjoys it himself."[4]

One of his last sayings related to his new Palace at Winchester. Impatient to have the works

[1] Lord Dartmouth's note in Burnet, ed. 1823, i. 118.
[2] Dr. Lake's *Diary* in *Camden Miscellany*, vol. i.
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Secret History of Whitehall.*

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finished, he remarked that "a year was a great time in his life."[1]

When on his deathbed, the Queen sent him a message that she was too unwell to resume her post by the couch, and implored pardon for any offence which she might unwittingly have given. "She ask my pardon, poor woman!" cried Charles. "I ask hers with all my heart."

In his last moments he apologised to those who had stood round him all night for the trouble he had caused. "He had been," he said, "a most unconscionable time dying; but he hoped that they would excuse it."[2] A like feeling ruffled the last moments of the polite Earl of Chesterfield, whose only expressed anxiety related to his friend Dayrolles being in the room without a chair to sit down upon—"Give Dayrolles a chair."

If he was ready at a reply, there were others about him who were not less happy. When he called Lord Chancellor Shaftesbury, in Ashley's own hearing, "the greatest rogue in England," the reply was—"Of a subject, sir, perhaps I am."[3] Not less witty was the sarcastic answer of the Lord Dorset, to whom I have already introduced the reader as a lover of Nell Gwyn. The Earl had come to Court on Queen Elizabeth's birthday, long kept as a holiday in London and elsewhere, and still, I believe, observed by the benchers of Gray's

[1] North, ed. 1826, ii. 105.
[2] Macaulay, i. 439.
[3] Preserved by the witty Lord Chesterfield. *Works*, ed. Lord Mahon, ii. 334.

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Inn. The King, forgetting the day, asked "what the bells rang for?" The answer given, the King asked further, "how it came to pass that her birth-day was still kept, while those of his father and grandfather were no more thought of than William the Conqueror's?" "Because," said the frank peer to the frank King, "she being a woman chose men for her counsellors, and men when they reign usually choose women."[1] Of the same stamp was the more than half-heard *aside* of the Duke of Buckingham, to an appeal to the monarch "as the father of his people." "Of a good many of them," whispered the author of the *Rehearsal.*

I have referred in a former chapter to the King's partiality for his dogs, one species of which is still celebrated among the *fancy* as King Charles's breed. On the occasion of an entry into Salisbury, an honest Cavalier pressed forward to see him, and came so near the coach that his Majesty cautioned the poor man not to cling too close to the door lest one of the little black spaniels in the coach should chance to bite him. The loyalist still persisting in being near, a spaniel seized him by the finger, and the sufferer cried with a loud voice, "God bless your Majesty, but G—d d—n your dogs!"[2] This story has been preserved to us by the mercurial Duke of Wharton as an illustration of the indulgence which the King accorded to his subjects on all occasions,—as an instance of the popular, easy, and

[1] *Richardsoniana.*
[2] Duke of Wharton's *Works.*

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endearing arts which ensure to a monarch the love and good-will of his people. But his best saying was his last,—"Let not poor Nelly starve!" and this, the parting request of the Merry Monarch, reminds us that it is time once more to return—to Nelly.

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CHAPTER VI.

Birth of the Duke of St. Albans—Arrival of Mademoiselle de Quérouaille—Death of the Duchess of Orleans—Nelly's house in Pall Mall—Countess of Castlemaine created Duchess of Cleveland—Sir John Birkenhead, Sir John Coventry, and the Actresses at the two Houses—Insolence of Dramatists and Actors—Evelyn overhears a conversation between Nelly and the King—The Protestant and Popish Mistresses—Story of the Service of Plate—Printed Dialogues illustrative of the rivalry of Nelly and the Duchess of Portsmouth—Madame Sévigné's account of it—Story of the Smock—Nelly in mourning for the Cham of Tartary—Story of the two Fowls—Portsmouth's opinion of Nelly—Concert at Nell's house—The Queen and La Belle Stewart at a Fair disguised as Country Girls—Births, Marriages, and Creations—Nelly's disappointment—Her witty remark to the King—Her son created Earl of Burford, and betrothed to the daughter and heiress of Vere, Earl of Oxford.

ON the 8th of May 1670, while the Court was on its way to Dover to receive and entertain the Duchess of Orleans, Nell Gwyn was delivered of a son in her apartments in Lincoln's Inn Fields. The father was King Charles II., and the son was called Charles Beauclerk. The boy grew in strength

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and beauty, and became a favourite with his father. Where the child was christened, or by whom he was brought up, I have failed in discovering. There is reason to believe that Sir Fleetwood Sheppard, the friend of the witty Earl of Dorset, was his tutor, and that the poet Otway was in some way connected with his education.[1] To Sheppard one of the best of the minor poems of Prior is addressed.

In the suite of followers attending the beautiful Duchess of Orleans to Dover came Louise Renée de Penencourt de Quérouaille, a girl of nineteen, of a noble but impoverished family in Brittany. She was one of the maids-of-honour to the Duchess, and famous for her beauty, though of a childish, simple, and somewhat baby face.[2] Charles, whose heart was formed of tinder, grew at once enamoured of his sister's pretty maid-of-honour. But Louise was not to be caught without conditions affecting the interests of England. While the Court stayed at Dover was signed that celebrated treaty by which England was secretly made subservient to a foreign Power, and her king the pensioner of Louis XIV. When this was done Clarendon was living in exile, and the virtuous Southampton, and the all-powerful Albemarle, were in their graves.

[1] Then for that cub her son and heir,
Let him remain in Otway's care.

Satire on Nelly. Harl. MS. 7319, fol. 135. [The satire is entitled *An Essay of Scandal*, 1681.]

[2] Such is Evelyn's description, confirmed by the various portraits of her preserved at Hampton Court Palace, at Goodwood, the seat of the Duke of Richmond, etc.

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Walter L. Collis, Ph. Sc.

Duchess of Portsmouth.

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I cannot conceal my opinion that Nokes was not making the French so ridiculous at Dover (the reader will remember the incident related in a former chapter), as the French were making the English infamous, at the same time and in the same place, by this same treaty.

The Duchess remained for a fortnight in London, and Waller sung her leave-taking in some of his courtly and felicitous couplets. It was indeed a last farewell. In another month the royal lady by whom the treaty was completed was no more. She died at St. Cloud on the 30th of June, in her twenty-sixth year, poisoned, it is supposed, by a dose of sublimate given in a glass of succory-water.[1]

Louise de Quérouaille abiding in England, became the mistress of the King, Duchess of Portsmouth, and—the rival of Nell Gwyn. Her only child by the King was recognised by the royal name of Lennox, created Duke of Richmond, and was the lineal ancestor of the present Goodwood family of that noble name and title.

On the return of the Court to London, Nelly

[1] See Bossuet's account of her death in *Gentleman's Magazine* for August 1851. [Littré seemed to have established that she died a natural death—probably from acute peritonitis, brought on by over-fatigue and by a chill caught from bathing in the river in her already weakened condition. He drew this conclusion from the medical report on her post-mortem examination. M. Lair has, however, taken up the old theory, that her death was caused by poison, and certainly Saint-Simon's account of her alleged poisoning in his *Mémoires* is circumstantial enough. The matter is fully discussed in *Madame* (1894), a fascinating volume by Julia Cartwright (Mrs. Henry Ady).]

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removed from Lincoln's Inn Fields to a house on the east end of the north side of Pall Mall, from whence in the following year she removed to a house on the south side with a garden towards St. James's Park. Her neighbour on one side was Edward Griffin, Esq., Treasurer of the Chamber, and ancestor of the present Lord Braybrooke; and, on the other, the widow of Charles Weston, third Earl of Portland.[1] Nelly at first had only a lease of the house, which, as soon as she discovered, she returned the conveyance to the King, with a remark characteristic of her wit and of the monarch to whom it was addressed. The King enjoyed the joke, and perhaps admitted its truth, so the house in Pall Mall was conveyed *free* to Nell and her representatives for ever. The truth of the story is confirmed by the fact that the house which occupies the site of the one in which Nelly lived, now No. 79, and tenanted by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, is the only freehold on the south or Park side of Pall Mall.[2]

For many months preceding the retirement of Nelly from the stage, the palace of Whitehall had

[1] Cunningham's *Handbook for London*, article "Pall Mall." [Nelly's first house in Pall Mall was pulled down in 1848 to make way for the Army and Navy Club. In the visitors' dining-room of the club there is shown a looking-glass which is said to have belonged to her.]

[2] It is right to add, as Mr. Fearnside has kindly informed me, that no entry of the grant is to be found in the Land Revenue Record Office. [The house has been twice rebuilt since Nell Gwyn lived in it, and is now occupied by the Eagle Insurance Office.]

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hardly been a place for either the wife or the mistress—the Queen or the Countess of Castlemaine. The King, in November 1669, when his intimacy with "Madam Gwin," as she was now called, had begun to be talked about, had settled Somerset House, in the Strand, on his Queen for her life; and in August 1670, when his liking for Nelly was still on the increase, and his growing partiality for Louise de Quérouaille the theme of common conversation, the imperious Countess of Castlemaine was appeased, for a time at least, by the Heralds' College title of Duchess of Cleveland.

There were people, however, and those too not of the sourer kind, who were far from being pleased with the present state of the morality at Court, and the nature and number of the King's amours. The theatres had become, it was said, nests of prostitution. In Parliament it was urged by the opponents of the Court that a tax should be levied on the playhouses. This was of course opposed; and by one speaker on that side the bold argument was advanced, that "the players were the King's servants, and a part of his pleasure." The speaker was Sir John Birkenhead, a man of wit, though not over lucky on this occasion. He was followed by Sir John Coventry, who asked, with much gravity, "whether did the King's pleasure lie among the men that acted, or the women?" The saying was conveyed to the King, and Sir John Coventry was waylaid on his road to his house in Suffolk Street, on a dark night in December, and his nose cut to

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the bone that he might remember the offence he had given to his sovereign. The allusion chiefly applied to Moll Davis and Nell Gwyn, and was made in the very year in which the latter gave birth to the Duke of St. Albans; while the punishment was inflicted in the very street in which Moll Davis lived.[1]

Players and authors required looking after. Shadwell brought Sir Robert Howard on the stage in the character of Sir Positive Atall, and in so marked a manner that the caricature was at once apparent. Mrs. Corey (of whom I have already given some account) imitated the oddities of Lady Harvey,[2] and was imprisoned for her skill and impertinence. Lacy, while playing the Country Gentleman in one of Ned Howard's unprinted plays, abused the Court with so much wit and insolence for selling places, and doing everything for money, that it was found proper to silence the play, and commit Lacy to the Porter's Lodge.[3] Kynaston mimicked Sir Charles Sedley, and was severely thrashed by Sedley for his pains.[4] The Duke of Buckingham, while busy with *The Rehearsal*, threatened to bring Sir William Coventry (uncle of Sir John) into a play at the King's House, but Coventry's courage averted the attempt.[5] He challenged the Duke for the in-

[1] Burnet, ed. 1823, i. 468. He was taken out of his coach (Reresby, ed. 1735, p. 18). The well-known Coventry Act against cutting and maiming had its origin in this incident.
[2] Pepys, Jan. 15, 1668–9.
[3] *Ibid.*, April 15, 20, 1667.
[4] *Ibid.*, Feb. 1, 1668–9.
[5] *Ibid.*, March 4, 1688–9.

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tended insult, and was committed to the Tower by the King for sending a challenge to a person of the Duke's distinction.

Charles's conduct was in no way changed by the personality of the abuse employed against him in the House of Commons. He still visited

His Clevelands, his Nells, and his Carwells.

Evelyn records a walk made on March 2, 1671, in which he attended him through St. James's Park, where he both saw and heard "a familiar discourse between the King and Mrs. Nelly, as they called an impudent comedian, she looking out of her garden on a terrace at the top of the wall, and the King standing on the green walk under it." The garden was attached to her house in Pall Mall, and the ground on which Nelly stood was a mount, or raised terrace, of which a portion may still be seen under the park wall of Marlborough House. Of this scene, at which Evelyn tells us he was "heartily sorry," my friend Mr. Ward has painted a picture of surprising truthfulness and beauty.[1]

When this interview occurred the King was taking his usual quick exercise in the Park, on his way to the Duchess of Cleveland, at *Berkshire House*—subsequently, and till within these few years, called *Cleveland House*—a detached mansion built by the Berkshire branch of the Howard

[1] In Ravenscroft's *London Cuckolds* (4to, 1683) is the following stage direction—"Dashwell and Jane upon a mount, looking over a wall that parts the two gardens," p. 73. Among Mr. Robert Cole's Nell Gwyn Papers (bills sent to Nelly for payment) there is a charge for this very Mount.

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family, on the site of the present Bridgewater House. Charles at this time divided his attentions between Nelly and the Duchess. Moll Davis had fallen out of favour, though not forsaken or unpensioned :—while many open and almost avowed infidelities on the part of the Duchess of Cleveland had lessened the kindly feelings of the King towards her, though he continued to supply ample means for the maintenance of the rank to which his partiality had raised her.[1] Poor Alinda, however, was no longer young, and the memory of old attractions could make but little way with Charles against the wit and beauty of Nell Gwyn, and the engaging youth and political influences of the new maid-of-honour, Louise de Quérouaille, or Mrs. Carwell, as she was called by the common people, to whom the name offered many difficulties for its proper pronunciation.

There is no reason to suspect that either Nelly or Louise was ever unfaithful to the light-hearted King, or that Charles did not appreciate the fidelity of his mistresses. The people (it was an age of confirmed immorality) rather rejoiced than otherwise at their sovereign's loose and disorderly life. Nelly became the idol of "the town," and was known far and near as the Protestant Mistress;

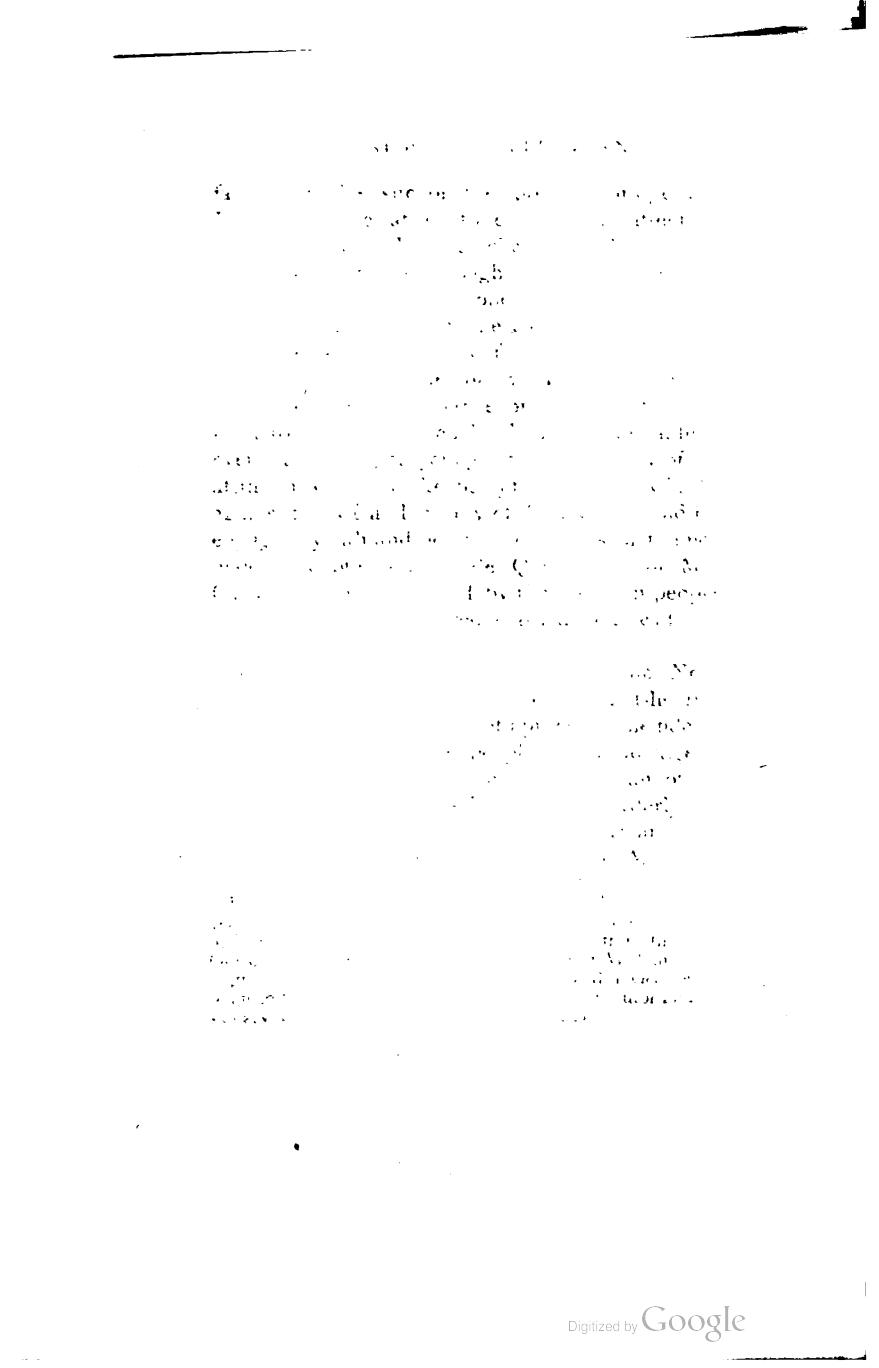
[1] She had £6000 a year out of the Excise, and £3000 a year from the same quarter for each of her sons. (*Harl. MS.* 6013, temp. Charles II.) Her pension from the Post Office of £4700 a year was stopped for a time in William III.'s reign; but the amount then withheld was paid in George I.'s reign to her son, the Duke of Grafton, sole executor and residuary legatee. (*Audit Office Enrolments.*)

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Duchess of Cleveland

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H. Williams pinx.

H. Williams. sculp.

Duchess of Cleveland.

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while Mrs. Carwell, or the Duchess of Portsmouth, as she had now become, was hated by the people, and was known, wherever Nelly was known, as the Popish Mistress. It is this contrast of position which has given to Nell Gwyn much of the odd and particular favour connected with her name. Nelly was an English girl—of humble origin—a favourite actress—a beauty, and a wit. The Duchess was a foreigner—of noble origin—with beauty certainly, but without English wit; and, worse still, sufficiently suspected to be little better than a pensioner from France, sent to enslave the English King and the English nation. To such a height did this feeling run that Misson was assured hawkers had been heard to cry a printed sheet, advising the King to part with the Duchess of Portsmouth, or to expect most dreadful consequences;[1] while a still stronger illustration of what the people thought of the Duchess is contained in the reply of her brother-in-law, the Earl of Pembroke, of whom the Duchess had threatened to complain to the King. The Earl told her that if she did he would set her upon her head at Charing Cross, and show the nation its grievance.[2]

A feeling of antipathy between Protestants and Roman Catholics was at this time exciting the people to many ridiculous pageants and expressions of ill-will to those about the Court suspected of anti-Protestant principles. A True Blue Protestant poet was a name of honour, and a Protestant sock

[1] Misson's *Memoirs*, 8vo, 1719, p. 204.
[2] Walpole's *Anecdotes of Painting*, ed. Wornum, p. 464.

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a favourite article of apparel.[1] When Nelly was insulted in her coach at Oxford by the mob, who mistook her for the Duchess of Portsmouth, she looked out of the window and said, with her usual good-humour, "Pray, good people, be civil; I am the Protestant whore." This laconic speech drew upon her the favour of the populace, and Nell was suffered to proceed without further molestation.[2]

An eminent goldsmith of the early part of the last century was often heard to relate a striking instance which he himself remembered of Nelly's popularity. His master, when he was an apprentice, had made a most expensive service of plate as a present from the King to the Duchess of Portsmouth: great numbers of people crowded the shop to see what the plate was like; some indulged in curses against the Duchess, while all were unanimous in wishing the present had been for the use of Mrs. Gwyn.[3] With the London apprentices, long an influential body east and west of Temple Bar, Nell was always a favourite.

She and the Duchess frequently met at Whitehall, often in good-humour, but oftener not in the

[1] Shadwell was called the True Blue Protestant poet; for the Protestant sock, see Scott's *Dryden*.

[2] [Both Nell Gwyn and the Duchess of Portsmouth were at Oxford during the parliament of 1681 (Luttrell's *Brief Historical Relation*, i. 71).] The great Lord Peterborough, when mistaken for the Duke of Marlborough, made a similar escape: "Gentlemen, I can convince you by two reasons that I am not the Duke. In the first place, I have only five guineas in my pocket; and in the second, they are heartily at your service."

[3] *The London Chronicle*, Aug. 15, 18, 1778.

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best temper one with the other, for Nelly was a wit, and loved to laugh at her Grace. The nature of these bickerings between them has been well but coarsely described in a single half-sheet of contemporary verses printed in 1682—"A Dialogue between the Dutchess of Portsmouth and Madam Gwin at parting." The Duchess was on her way to France, I believe, for the first time since she landed at Dover, and the language employed by the rival ladies is at least characteristic. Nelly vindicates her fidelity:

> Let Fame, that never yet spoke well of woman,
> Give out I was a strolling whore and common;
> Yet have I been to him, since the first hour,
> As constant as the needle to the flower.

The Duchess threatens her with the people's "curse and hate," to which Nell replies:

> The people's hate, much less their curse, I fear.
> I do them justice with less sums a year.
> I neither run in court nor city's score,
> I pay my debts, distribute to the poor.

Another single sheet in folio, dated a year earlier, records "A pleasant Battle between Tutty and Snapshort, the two Lap-Dogs of the Utopian Court." Tutty belonged to Nell Gwyn, and Snapshort to the Duchess, and the dialogue is supposed to allude to some real fray between the rival ladies. Tutty describes the mistress of Snapshort as one of Pharaoh's lean kine, and with a countenance so sharp as if she would devour him as she had devoured the nation, while Snapshort observes of

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Nelly that she hopes to see her once more upon a dunghill, or in her old calling of selling oranges and lemons.

But a still livelier description has been left us by one of the most charming of lady letter-writers: "Mademoiselle amasses treasure," says Madame Sévigné, "and makes herself feared and respected by as many as she can; but she did not foresee that she should find a young actress in her way, whom the King dotes on, and she has it not in her power to withdraw him from her. He divides his care, his time, and his wealth between these two. The actress is as haughty as Mademoiselle; she insults her, she makes grimaces at her, she attacks her, she frequently steals the King from her, and boasts whenever he gives her the preference. She is young, indiscreet, confident, wild, and of an agreeable humour. She sings, she dances, acts her part with a good grace; has a son by the King, and hopes to have him acknowledged. As to Mademoiselle, she reasons thus: 'This lady,' says she, 'pretends to be a person of quality; she says she is related to the best families in France: whenever any person of distinction dies she puts herself into mourning. If she be a lady of such quality, why does she demean herself to be a courtesan? She ought to die with shame. As for me, it is my profession. I do not pretend to be anything better. He has a son by me; I contend that he ought to acknowledge him, and I am assured he will; for he loves me as well as Mademoiselle.'"

The good sense of this is obvious enough; but

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the satire which it contains will be found to merit illustration.

There is a very rare print of the Duchess of Portsmouth reclining on a mossy bank, with very little covering over her other than a laced chemise. There is also an equally rare print of Nelly in nearly the same posture, and equally unclad. The story runs that Nell had contrived to filch the chemise from the Duchess, and by wearing it herself at a time when the Duchess should have worn it, to have attracted the King, and tricked her rival.[1]

There is yet another story illustrative of Madame Sévigné's letter. The news of the Cham of Tartary's death reached England at the same time with the news of the death of a prince of the blood in France. The Duchess appeared at Court in mourning—so did Nelly. The latter was asked in the hearing of the Duchess, for whom *she* appeared in mourning. "Oh!" said Nell, "have you not heard of my loss in the death of the Cham of Tartary?" "And what relation," replied her friend, "was the Cham of Tartary to you?" "Oh," answered Nelly, "exactly the same relation that the Prince of ——— was to Mlle. Quérouaille." This was a saying after the King's own heart.

Another of her retorts on the Duchess has been preserved in a small chap-book called "Jokes upon Jokes," printed in London about the year 1721. Its doggerel hobbles thus :—

[1] Morse's Catalogue of Prints, made by Dodd, the auctioneer, by whom they were sold in 1816.

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The Duchess of Portsmouth one time supped with the King's Majesty;
Two chickens were at table, when the Duchess would make 'em three.
Nell Gwyn, being by, denied the same; the Duchess speedily
Reply'd here's one, another two, and two and one makes three.

'Tis well said, lady, answered Nell: O King, here's one for thee,
Another for myself, sweet Charles, 'cause you and I agree;
The third she may take to herself, because she found the same:
The King himself laughed heartily, while Portsmouth blush'd for shame.

It was on a somewhat similar occasion that Nell called Charles the Second *her* Charles the *third*—meaning that her first lover was Charles Hart, her second Charles Sackville, and her third Charles Stewart. The King may have enjoyed the joke, for he loved a laugh, as I have before observed, even at his own expense.

What the Duchess thought of such jokes was no secret to De Foe. "I remember," he says, "that the late Duchess of Portsmouth in the time of Charles II. gave a severe retort to one who was praising Nell Gwyn, whom she hated. They were talking of her wit and beauty, and how she always diverted the King with her extraordinary repartees, how she had a fine mien, and appeared as much the lady of quality as anybody. 'Yes, madam,' said the Duchess, 'but anybody may know she has been an orange-wench by her swearing.'"[1]

[1] De Foe's *Review*, viii. 247-8, as quoted in Wilson's *Life of De Foe*, i. 38. [Pepys (Oct. 5, 1667) says: "To see how

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Of her manner in diverting the King, Cibber has preserved a story from the relation of Bowman, the actor, who lived to a green old age, and from whom Oldys picked up some characteristic anecdotes. Bowman, then a youth, and famed for his voice, was appointed to take part in a concert at the private lodgings of Mrs. Gwyn; at which were present the King, the Duke of York, and one or two more usually admitted to those detached parties of pleasure. When the music was over, the King gave it extraordinary commendations. "Then, sir," said the lady, "to show that you do not speak like a courtier, I hope you will make the performers a handsome present." The King said he had no money about him, and asked the Duke if he had any. "I believe, sir" (answered the Duke), "not above a guinea or two." Merry Mrs. Nell, turning to the people about her, and making bold with the King's common expression, cried, "Odds fish! what company am I got into?"[1]

What the songs at Nell's concert were like we may gather from Tom D'Urfey, a favourite author for finding words to popular pieces of music. His "Joy to great Cæsar" was much in vogue:—

Nell cursed, for having so few people in the pit, was pretty." In *Madam Nelly's Complaint, a Satyr*, Etherege writes:

"Before great Charles let Quacks and Sea-men lye,
He ne're heard Swearers, till Moll Knight and I."]

[1] Cibber's *Apology*, ed. 1740, p. 448. Bowman died March 23, 1739, aged 88.

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Joy to great Cæsar,
Long life, love, and pleasure;
'Tis a health that divine is,
Fill the bowl high as mine is;
Let none fear a fever,
But take it off thus, boys;
Let the King live for ever,
'Tis no matter for us, boys.[1]

No less was the chorus of a song in his "Virtuous Wife":—

Let Cæsar live long, let Cæsar live long,
For ever be happy, and ever be young;
And he that dares hope to change a King for a Pope,
Let him die, let him die, while Cæsar lives long.

If these were sung, as I suspect they were, at Nelly's house, it was somewhat hard that the King had nothing to give, by way of reward, beyond empty praise for so much loyalty in what was at least meant for song.

There were occurring in England at this time certain events of moment to find places either in the page of history or biography; but in many of which "the chargeable ladies about the Court," as Shaftesbury designated the King's mistresses, would probably take very little interest. The deaths of Fairfax or St. John, of Clarendon or Milton, of the mother of Oliver Cromwell, or of the loyal Marquess of Winchester (all of which happened during the time referred to in the present chapter), would hardly create a moment's concern at Whitehall. The news of a second Dutch war might excite more, as it involved an expense likely to

[1] D'Urfey's *Pills*, ii. 155.

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divert the King's money from his mistresses. Greater interest, we may be sure, was felt in the death of the Duchess of York and the speculations on the subject of her successor, in Blood's stealing the crown, in the opening of a new theatre in Dorset Gardens, in the representation of *The Rehearsal*, in the destruction by fire of the first Drury Lane, and in the marriage of the King's eldest child by the Duchess of Cleveland to Thomas, Lord Dacre, afterwards Earl of Sussex.

While *The Rehearsal* was drawing crowded houses—indeed, in the same month in which it first appeared—Nell Gwyn was delivered (Dec. 25, 1671) of a second child by the King, called James, in compliment to the Duke of York. The boy thrived, and as he grew in strength became, as his brother still continued, a favourite with his father. The Queen, long used to the profligate courses of her husband, had abandoned all hope of his reformation, so that a fresh addition to the list of his natural children caused no particular emotion. Her Majesty, moreover, enjoyed herself after an innocent fashion of her own, and at times in a way to occasion some merriment in the Court. One of her adventures in the company of La Belle Stewart and the Duchess of Buckingham (the daughter of Sir Thomas Fairfax) deserves to be related. The Court was at Audley End in the autumn of 1670, and the temptation of a fair in the neighbourhood induced the Queen and several of her attendants to visit it in disguise. They therefore dressed themselves like country girls, in

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red petticoats and waistcoats. Sir Bernard Gascoigne rode on a cart-jade before the Queen, another gentleman in like fashion before the Duchess of Richmond, and a Mr. Roper before the Duchess of Buckingham. Their dresses, however, were, it is said, so much overdone, that they looked more like mountebanks than country clowns, and they were consequently followed as soon as they arrived at the fair by a crowd of curious people. The Queen stepping into a booth to buy a pair of yellow stockings for her sweetheart, and Sir Bernard asking for a pair of gloves, striped with blue, for his sweetheart, they were at once detected by their false dialect and gibberish. A girl in the crowd remembered to have seen the Queen at dinner, and at once made known her discovery. The whole concourse of people were soon collected in one spot to see the Queen. It was high time, therefore, to get their horses and return to Audley End. They were soon remounted and out of the fair, but not out of their trouble, for as many country-people as had horses followed with their wives, children, sweethearts, or neighbours behind them, and attended the Queen to the court gate. "And thus," says the writer to whom we are indebted for the relation of the adventure, "was a merry frolic turned into a penance."[1] The readers of Pepys and De Grammont will remember that La Belle Jennings had a somewhat similar mishap when, dressed as an orange-girl, and accompanied by

[1] Mr. Henshaw to Sir Robert Paston, October 13, 1670. Ives's *Select Papers*, 4to, 1773, p. 39.

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Miss Price, La Belle sought to visit the German fortune-teller.

While the Court was alternately annoyed and amused with diversions of this description, and the death of the Earl of Sandwich and the war with the Dutch were still subjects of conversation, the Duchess of Cleveland, on the 16th of July, 1672, was delivered of a daughter, and on the 29th of the same month and year the fair Quérouaille produced a son. The King disowned the girl but acknowledged the boy, and many idle conjectures were afloat both in Court and city on the subject. The father of the Cleveland child was, it is said, Colonel Churchill, afterwards the great Duke of Marlborough, then a young and handsome adventurer about Whitehall. The girl was called Barbara, after her mother, and became a nun.

These events were varied in the following month by the marriage of the Duke of Grafton, the King's son by the Duchess of Cleveland, to the only child of the Earl and Countess of Arlington ; by the birth of a first child to the Duke and Duchess of Monmouth ; and by the widowhood in December of La Belle Stewart, the beautiful Duchess of Richmond. In the following year other occurrences took place in which Nelly was interested. On the 19th August 1673 Mademoiselle de Quérouaille was created Duchess of Portsmouth, and in October following, Moll Davis, her former rival in the royal affections, was delivered of a daughter, called Mary Tudor, and acknowledged by the King. Following close on these was the marriage of the Duke of York to

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his future queen ; the introduction of the opera into England ; the opening of the new theatre in Drury Lane ; the marriage of the future Earl of Lichfield to Charlotta, another natural daughter of the King by the Duchess of Cleveland ; the creation of Charles Fitzroy to be Duke of Southampton ; the marriage of the Duchess of Portsmouth's sister to the Earl of Pembroke ; Lord Buckhurst's elevation to the earldom of Middlesex ; that of the King's son by Katharine Pegg to be Earl of Plymouth ; and that of the Duchess of Portsmouth's son to be Duke of Richmond.

Some of these creations, both natal and heraldic, were little to the liking of Nelly, who took her own way of showing her dissatisfaction. "Come hither, you little bastard," she cried to her son Charles, in the hearing of his father.[1] The King remonstrated, and Nelly, with a snappish and yet good-natured laugh, replied—"I have no better name to call him by." Never was a peerage sought in so witty and abrupt a manner, and never was a plea for one so immediately admitted, the King creating his eldest son by Nell Gwyn, on the 27th of December 1676, Baron of Headington and Earl of Burford. Nelly had now another name to give to her child. But this was not all that was done, and, as I see reason to believe, at this time. The heiress of the Veres,

[1] Granger, ed. 1779, iii. 211. [In another version of the story the scene is laid at Lauderdale House, Highgate (now included in Waterlow Park). Nell Gwyn, as she stood at the window, threatened to throw the boy out unless her wish was granted, whereupon the King, who was coming up the garden path, exclaimed, "God save the Earl of Burford!"]

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the daughter of the twentieth and last Earl of Oxford of that illustrious family, was betrothed by the King to the young Earl of Burford; and, though the lively orange-girl was not spared to witness the marriage, yet she lived to see the future wife of her son in the infancy of those charms which made her one of the most conspicuous of the Kneller Beauties, still so attractive in the collection at Hampton Court.[1]

[1] When Dugdale was busy with his *Baronage*, he laid the following statement of difficulties before the King:—

"Whereas the second volume of an Historicall Worke, intituled the *Baronage of England* (being extracted from publiq records, and other authorities) is now in the presse; and extending from the end of K. Henry the Third's reigne containeth what is most memorable of the English Nobility throughout all times since; in w^ch^ the preambles of most Creation Patents have been usefull. Descending down to the reign of this king, the Author humbly conceiveth, that there is some deficiency in that of the Duke of Monmouth's Creation; no mention at all being made that he is his Maties naturall son, though in some patents, and other instruments since, he hath been owned so to be. In that also of the Countesse of Castlemaine, whereby she hath the title of Countesse of Southampton and Dutchesse of Cleveland, conferred on her; her eldest son (on whom those honours are entailed) is denominated Charles Palmer, and George (her third son), to whom, in case Charles die w^th^out issue male, the remaynder is limitted, is sayd to be her second son, and likewise surnamed Palmer; but afterwards, upon his being created Earle of Northumberland, called Fitz-roy, and sayd to be her third son. Also in the Creation-Patent of the same Charles, to be Duke of Southampton, the name of Fitz-roy is attributed to him. These things considered, the Author most humbly craveth direction what to do herein; whether to decline the mention of all his Maties creations, rather than from the authoritie of these Patents to divulge such contradictions; though thereby he shall hazard the displeasure of some, whom his Matie hath deservedly raysed to such degrees of honour, since his happy restoration.

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"If it be resolved, that all of them shall be called *Fitz-roys;* Then forasmuch as the Duke of Southampton, and Earle of Northumberland, and likewise the Duke of Grafton, are sayd to be the King's naturall sons by the sayd Dutchesse of Cleveland; whether it will not be as proper to make mention on what particular woman his Matie begot the Dukes of Monmouth, Richmond, and E. of Plimouth?

"This being shewed to K. Charles the Second, by the Earl of Anglesey, then Ld Privye Seale, the king directed that these his naturall children should be all of them called *Fitz-Roys;* but no mention to be made of the mothers of these three last-named; viz. Monmouth, Richmond, and Plymouth."—Hamper's *Life of Dugdale*, p. 494.

[Apparently the Duke of Monmouth, the Duke of Richmond, and the Earl of Plymouth did not avail themselves of the privilege of being called "Fitz Roy."]

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CHAPTER VII.

Houses in which Nelly is said to have lived—Burford House, Windsor, one of the few genuine—Her losses at basset—Court paid to Nelly by the Duke of Monmouth, Lord Cavendish, etc.—Death of her mother—Printed elegy on her death—Nelly's household expenses—Bills for her chair and bed—Death of Mrs. Roberts—Foundation of Chelsea Hospital—Nelly connected with its origin—Books dedicated to Nelly—Death of her second son—The Earl of Burford created Duke of St. Albans—Nelly's only letter—Ken and Nelly at Winchester—Nelly at Avington—Death of the King—Was the King poisoned?—Nelly to have been created Countess of Greenwich if the King had lived.

THERE are more houses pointed out in which Nell Gwyn is said to have lived than sites of palaces belonging to King John, hunting-lodges believed to have sheltered Queen Elizabeth, or mansions and posting-houses in which Oliver Cromwell resided or put up. She is said by some to have been born at Hereford; by others at London; and Oxford it is found has a fair claim to be considered as her birthplace. But the houses in which she is said to have lived far exceed

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in number the cities contending for the honour of her birth. She is believed by some to have lived at Chelsea, by others at Bagnigge Wells, Highgate, and Walworth, and Filberts, near Windsor, are added to the list of reputed localities. A staring inscription in the Strand in London instructs the curious passenger that a house at the upper end of a narrow court was "formerly the dairy of Nell Gwyn." I have been willing to believe in one and all of these conjectural residences, but—after a long and careful inquiry, I am obliged to reject them all. Nell's early life was spent in Drury Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields; her latter life in Pall Mall, and in Burford House in the town of Windsor.[1] The rate-books of the parish of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields record her residence in Pall Mall from 1670 to her death, and the site of her house in Windsor may be established, were other evidence wanting, by the large engraving after Knyff.[2]

[1] At Windsor "the Prince of Wales is lodged in the Princess of Denmark's house, which was Mrs. Ellen Gwyn's." —Letter, Aug. 14, 1688, *Ellis Correspondence*, ii. 118. [In the Chamberlain of Windsor's accounts for 1689 is this entry relating to the then residence of Prince George of Denmark and the Princess Anne: "More for Madm. Gwynn's house in the possession of the Prince of Denmark, 15 years in arrear at 2s. per ann.;" the arrears were subsequently paid by the Duke of St. Albans. The warrant of Charles II., dated 1681, assigning to Nell Gwyn Burford House, now the site of the King's Mews, is printed in *Hist. MSS. Comm., 4th Report*, part i. p. 303 *a*; an account of the decorations is in *Annals of Windsor*, by Tighe and Davis, 1858, ii. 327, 441.]

[2] The engraving is in *Nouveau Théâtre de la Grande Bretagne* (fol. 1724), vol. i., plate 14.—G. G.

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We have seen from Cibber that Nelly was fond of having concerts at her house, and that she never failed in urging the claims of those who played and sang to the favourable consideration of the King and the Duke of York. She had her basset-table, too, and in one night is said to have lost to the once beautiful Duchess of Mazarin as much as 1400 guineas, or £5000 at least of our present money.[1] Basset, long the fashionable game, was, I believe, introduced into this country from France. Etherege and Lady Mary Wortley have sung its attractions and its snares, and D'Urfey has condemned it in one of the best of his plays. Nor will Evelyn's description of the basset-table which he saw on a Sunday night at Whitehall, only a few hours before the King was seized with his last illness, be effaced from the memory of those to whom his work is known.

Nelly possessed great interest with the King, and her house at Windsor, with its staircases painted expressly for her by the fashionable pencil of Verrio,[2] was the rendezvous of all who wished

[1] Lucas's *Lives of Gamesters*, 12mo, 1714. Lord Cavendish lost a thousand pounds, in two nights, at Madame Mazarin's—Countess-Dowager of Sunderland to the Earl of Halifax, Aug. 5, 1680 (Miss Berry's *Lady Rachael Russell*, p. 373).

[2] Accounts of the Paymaster of His Majesty's Works and Buildings, preserved in the Audit Office. [In an account of moneys received by William Roberts and expended by him, 1675–78, is the entry, "To Mon^r. Bodevine for repareing of Madame Gwin's house 50 0 0;" but this may very well refer to her house in Pall Mall. (*Appendix to 9th Report of Historical MSS. Comm.*, p. 450 *b*.)]

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to stand well at the Castle. The Duke of Monmouth,—the handsome Sidney of De Grammont's Memoirs, afterwards Earl of Romney,—and the patriot Lord Cavendish, afterwards Duke of Devonshire, were among Nelly's friends. Such constant court was paid to her for political purposes by the Duke of Monmouth and Lord Cavendish, that Lady Rachael Russell records the King's command that Nelly should refuse to see them.[1] Monmouth was endeavouring to regain his situations, of which he had been properly deprived by his father, and Cavendish was urging the claims of the Protestants on behalf of the famous Bill for excluding the Duke of York from the succession to the Crown. Nelly, it will be remembered, had already identified herself with the Protestant interest, but the regard with which she was treated by King James is ample evidence that she had never abused her influence, in order to prejudice Charles II. against his brother. Indeed she would appear to have been among the first who foresaw the insane ambition of Monmouth. Nell is said to have called him "Prince Perkin" to his face, and when the Duke replied that she was "ill-bred,"—"Ill-bred!" retorted Nelly; "was Mrs. Barlow better bred than I?"[2]

I have introduced the mother of Nelly by name to the reader, and I have now to record her death.

[1] Lady Sunderland to Henry Sidney, Dec. 16, 1679. Romney's *Diary*, etc., i. 207.) Lady Rachael Russell to her husband, April 3, 1680. (Miss Berry's *Lady Rachael Russell*, pp. 210, 215, 367.)

[2] *Gentleman's Magazine* for November 1851, p. 471.

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"We hear," says the *Domestic Intelligencer* of the 5th of August, 1679, "that Madam Ellen Gwyn's mother, sitting lately by the water-side at her house by the Neat-Houses, near Chelsea, fell accidentally into the water and was drowned." Oldys had seen a quarto pamphlet of the time giving an account of her death. This I have never met with, but among the Luttrell Collection of ballads and broadsides sold in 1849 at the Stowe sale was an elegy "upon that never-to-be-forgotten Matron, *Old Maddam Gwinn*, who was unfortunately drown'd in her own Fish-pond on the 29th of July 1679." The verse is of the lowest possible character of Grub Street elegy, nor could I, after a careful perusal, glean from it any biographical matter other than that she was very fat and fond of brandy. She was buried in the church of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, and it is said with five[1] gilded scutcheons to the hearse; but this could hardly be, if the ballad-monger's date of the 29th is correct, for the register of St. Martin's records her burial on the 30th, the next day.[2] That the old lady resided at

[1] The correct reading in Rochester's lampoon is "*Fine* gilded 'Scutcheons." *Works*, ed. 1709, p. 102.—G. G.

[2] 1679, 30 July. Mrs. Ellinor Gwin, w. *Burial Register of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields.* See also *Gentleman's Magazine* for November 1851, p. 470. [There was a monument to her memory in the south aisle of the old church of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields with this inscription: "Here lyes interred the body of Helena Gwynn, born in this parish, who departed this life ye 20th of July MDCLXXIX. in the lvi yeare of her age." With the rebuilding of the church in 1721 the monument disappeared. (*Notes and Queries*, 2nd ser., v. 9.) Good views and a plan of the old church are in the Crace Collection, Brit. Mus., portfolio xviii., nos. 34–37.]

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one time with her daughter, and in her house in Pall Mall, may, I think, be inferred from some curious bills for debts incurred by Nelly, accidentally discovered among the mutilated Exchequer papers: an apothecary's bill containing charges for cordial juleps with pearls for "Master Charles," and "plasters," "glysters." "cordials," for "old Mrs. Gwyn."

From these bills, the originals of which have been kindly entrusted to me by Mr. Loddy and Mr. Robert Cole, some extracts may be made that will interest the reader. The bills are of a miscellaneous nature—a chance saving from a bundle of household and other expenses of the years 1674, 1675, and 1676. They include charges for a French coach, and for a great *cipher* from the chariot painter; for a bedstead, with silver ornaments; for side-boxes at the Duke's Theatre, to which she never went alone, but often with as many as four people, Nell paying for all; for great looking-glasses; for cleansing and burnishing the warming-pan; for the hire of sedan-chairs; for dress, furniture, and table expenses; for white satin petticoats, and white and red satin night-gowns; for kilderkins of strong ale, ordinary ale, and "a barrel of eights"; for alms to poor men and women; for oats and beans, and "chaney" oranges at threepence each; "for a fine landskip fan"; for scarlet satin shoes covered with silver lace, and a pair of satin shoes laced over with gold for "Master Charles." One or two of these documents have escaped entire. A bill for Nell's sedan-chair runs thus:—

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June 17, 1675.

	£	s.	d.
The body of the chaire	3	10	0
the best neats leather to cover the outside . .	3	10	0
600 inside nailes, coulered and burnishd . .	0	11	0
600 guilt with water gold at 5s. per cent. . .	1	10	0
1200 outside nailes, the same gold, at 8s. per cent.	4	16	0
300 studds, the same gold	1	16	0
2000 halfe roofe nailes, the same gold . . .	1	14	0
200 toppit nailes, same gold	3	14	0
5 sprigs for the top, rich guilt	4	0	0
a haspe for the doore, rich guilt	1	10	0
ffor change of 4 glasses	2	0	0
2 pound 5s. for one new glasse, to be abated out of that ffor a broken glasse 15s. . . .	1	10	0
ffor guilding windows and irons	1	5	0
Serge ffor the bottom	0	2	0
canuisse to put vnder the leather	0	8	0
all sorts of iron nailes	0	5	0
workmanshipe, the chaire inside and outside .	2	10	0
	34	11	0

Reict. dated 13 July, 1675, for "30£ in full discharge."

That Nell did not always employ her own sedan is evident from the following bill :—

For careing you to Mrs. Knights and to Madam Younges, and to Madam Churchfillds, and wating four oures	0	5	0
For careing you the next day, and wating seven oures	0	7	6
For careing you to Mrs. Knights, and to Mrs. Cassells,[1] and to Mrs. Churchills, and to Mrs. Knights	0	4	0
For careing one Lady Sanes to ye play at White Halle, and wayting	0	3	6
For careing you yesterday, and wayting eleven oures	0	11	6
Ye some is . .	1	11	6

13 October, 75.

Recd. them of Tho. Groundes in full of these Bills and all other demands from Madam Gwin, ... } £2. —. —

by me William Calow.

[1] Nell Gwyn's sister, then wife or widow of "Captain" John Cassells. She married again, and is mentioned in Nell's will as "Mrs. Rose Forster."

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Chairman Callow, with singular discreetness, omits, it will be seen, to name the places at which he waited longest. Eleven shillings and sixpence seems little for carrying and waiting eleven hours. But the most curious bill, and it is one with which I have been (1852) only recently supplied, is a silversmith's—in which the principal sum is a charge for making a bedstead for Nelly, with ornaments of silver, such as the King's head, slaves, eagles, crowns, and Cupids, and Jacob Hall dancing upon a rope of wirework. The document must be given entire :—

Work done for y^e^ righte Hon^ble^. Madame Guinne.
John Cooqûs, siluersmyth his bill.

		£	s.	d.
1674.	Deliuered the head of y^e^ bedstead weighing 885 onces 12 lb. and I haue received 636 onces 15 dweight so that their is over and aboue of me owne siluer two hundred [and] forty eight onces 17 dweight at 7s. 11d. par once (y^e^ siluer being a d't worse par once according y^e^ reste) wich comes to	98	10	2
	For y^e^ making of y^e^ 636 onces 15 d't at 2s. 11d. par once, comes to . . .	92	17	3

	onces.	dweight.
Deliuered y^e^ kings head weighing	197	5
one figure weighing	445	15
y^e^ other figure with y^e^ caracter weighing	428	5
y^e^ slaues and y^e^ reste belonging unto it	255	
y^e^ two Eagles weighing . .	169	10
one of the crowne[s] weighing .	94	5
y^e^ second crown weighing .	97	10
y^e^ third crowne weighing .	90	2
y^e^ fowerd crowne weighing .	82	
one of y^e^ Cupids weighing .	121	8

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P. Lely Eques pinxt. R. Tompson excudit.

Nell Gwyn.

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	onces.	dweight.	£	s.	d.
ye second boye weighing .	101	10			
ye third boye weighing .	93	15			
ye fowered boye weighing .	88	17			
Altogether two thousand two hundred sexty fiue onces 2d wight of sterling siluer at 8s. par once, comes to .			906	0	10
Paid for ye Essayes of ye figures and other things into ye tower			0	5	0
Paid for iacob haalle [Jacob Hall] dansing upon ye robbe [rope] of Weyer Worck[1]			1	10	0
For ye cleinsing and brunisching a sugar box, a pepper box, a mustard pott and two kruyzes			0	12	0
For mending ye greatte silver andyrons .			0	10	0
Paid to ye cabbenet maker for ye greatte bord for ye head of the bedstead and for ye other bord that comes under it and.....boorring the wholles into ye head			3	0	0
Paid to Mr. Consar for karuing ye said bord			1	0	0
For ye bettering ye sodure wich was in the old bedstead			5	3	7
Paid to ye smid for ye 2 yorne hoops and for ye 6 yorn baars krampes and nealles			1	5	0
Paid for ye wood denpied de staall for one of ye figures			0	4	6
Paid ye smith for a hoock to hang up a branche candlestick			0	2	0
Paid to ye smith for ye baars kramps and nealles to hold up ye slaues . . .			0	5	0
Given to me Journey man by order of Madame Guinne			1	0	0
Paid to ye smyth for ye yorn worck to hold up ye Eagles and for ye two hoocks to hold the bedstead again the wall . .			0	3	0
Paid for ye pied de stalle of Ebony to hold up the 2 georses			1	10	0
For ye mending of ye goold hower glasse .			0	2	6
Deliuered two siluer bottels weighing 37 onces 17 d't at 8s. par once, comes to .			15	2	9

[1] In another bill I observe a charge "for ye cleensing of Jacobs halle of weyer worck."

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	£	s.	d.
Paid for ye other foot to hold up ye other figure	0	4	6
For sodering ye wholles and for repairing mending and cleinsing the two figures of Mr. Traherne his making	3	0	0
For ye making of a crowne upon one of ye figures	1	0	0
Giuen to me iourney man by order of Madame Guinne	1	0	0
Deliuered a handel of a kneif weighing 11 dweight more then ye old one wich comes with ye making of it to	0	5	10
For ye cleinsing of eight pictures	0	10	0
	£1135	3	1[1]

And now, quitting Nelly's household and other expenses, it is full time to turn to matters of more moment.

In the autumn of 1679 died Mrs. [Jane] Roberts, the daughter of a clergyman, who had lived with the King, though she is not known to have had any children by him.[2] She had sent for Burnet when dying, and expressed her sense of sorrow for her past life in so sincere a manner, that he desired her to describe her contrition in a letter to the King. At her request Burnet drew the draft of such a letter, but she never had strength enough to copy it out. Burnet on this wrote in his own name to the King, and sent a strong letter of

[1] In the Works Accounts of the Crown at Whitehall, in 1662–3, is a payment (£53 12*s.* 2*d.*) to Paul Audley "for silvering a rayle to goe about the Duchess of York's bed, with seven pedestals and 60 Ballisters." The bed, as was long the custom, stood in an alcove off and yet in the bedchamber.

[2] Unless, indeed, the "Carola Roberts," of the *Secret Service Expenses of Charles II.*, is the daughter of this Mrs. Roberts by the King.

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remonstrance through Will Chiffinch, the keeper of the backstairs. Seldom, indeed, has a sovereign been addressed so boldly as by Burnet in this letter.[1] The King read it twice over, and then threw it in the fire; expressing himself not long after with great sharpness when Burnet's name was mentioned to him. But Charles had his own way, in this life at least, of atoning for his misdeeds, and to one of his best actions he is said to have been instigated by no less a person than Nell Gwyn.

This was the erection of a Royal Hospital at Chelsea for aged and disabled soldiers, the first stone of which was laid by the King himself in the spring of 1682. The idea, it is said, originated with Nelly, and I see no reason to doubt the tradition, supported as it is by the known benevolence of her character, her sympathy with the suffering, and the fact that sixty years ago at least Nelly's share in its foundation was recorded beneath her portrait serving as the sign of a public-house adjoining the Hospital.[2] The sign remains, but not the inscription. Yet the tradition is still rife in Chelsea, and is not soon likely to die out. Ormonds, and Granbys, and Admiral Vernons disappear, but Nelly remains, and long may she swing with her favourite lamb in the row or street commemorated for ever in the Chelsea Pensioners of Wilkie!

There were thousands alive when the Hospital was first thought of, who carried about them marks

[1] Burnet, ed. 1823, i. 457, ii. 287, and vi. 257; also Calamy's *Life*, ii. 83.

[2] Lysons's *Environs of London*, ii. 155.

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of service in the recent struggle which distracted the three kingdoms, in a way in which, let us hope, they will never again be made to suffer. There were old men who had fought at Edge Hill and Marston Moor, and younger ones who could show that they had bled at Naseby or at Worcester. The Restoration had witnessed the establishment of a standing army, and many of Cromwell's Ironsides filling the ranks of the Coldstream Guards and Oxford Blues were now unfit for active service, and younger men were required to fill their places. What was to become of the veterans when their pay was gone? Their trade had been war, and their pay never sufficient for more than their immediate wants. But for Chelsea Hospital they might have starved on the casual bounty of the people and the chance assistance of their younger comrades.

In an age when new books were numerous—and few appeared without a dedication—it is natural to infer that Nelly would not escape. Three dedications to her are known. One in 1674, by Duffet, before his play of *The Spanish Rogue;* a second in 1678, by Whitcombe, before a rare little volume called *Janua Divorum: or, the Lives and Histories of the Heathen Gods;* and a third in 1679, by Mrs. Behn, before her play of *The Feigned Courtezans.* All are adulatory. Duffet was unknown to her, and he was not certain, he tells us, that Nelly had ever seen his play. It was, however, necessary, he observes, to have a dedication to his book, and he selected "Madam Ellen Gwyn," deeming that

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"under the protection of the most perfect beauty and the greatest goodness in the world" his play would be safe. "Nature," says Duffet, "almost overcome by Art, has in yourself rallied all her scattered forces, and on your charming brow sits smiling at their slavish toils which yours and her envious foes endure; striving in vain with the fading weak supplies of Art to rival your beauties, which are ever the same and almost incomparable." This is high-flown enough; but all is not like this; and there is one passage which deserves to be remembered. Nelly, he says, was so readily and frequently doing good, "as if," he observes, "doing good were not her nature, but her business." The person who wrote thus happily had been a milliner in the New Exchange before he took to literature as a profession.

Whitcombe inscribes his book "To the illustrious Madam Ellen Gwyn"; but Aphra Behn, the Astrea of the stage, is still stronger; "Your permission has enlightened me, and I with shame look back on my past ignorance which suffered me not to pay an adoration long since where there was so very much due; yet even now, though secure in my opinion, I make this sacrifice with infinite fear and trembling, well knowing that so excellent and perfect a creature as yourself differs only from the divine powers in this—the offerings made to you ought to be worthy of you, whilst they accept the will alone." Well might Johnson observe, that in the meanness and servility of hyperbolical adulation, Dryden had never been equalled, except by

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Aphra Behn in an address to Eleanor Gwyn. But the arrow of adulation is not yet drawn to the head, and Mrs. Behn goes on to say, "Besides all the charms, and attractions, and powers of your sex, you have beauties peculiar to yourself—an eternal sweetness, youth, and air which never dwelt in any face but yours. You never appear but you gladden the hearts of all that have the happy fortune to see you, as if you were made on purpose to put the whole world into good humour." This, however, is not all, for the strain turns to her children, and her own humility, and is therefore nearer the truth. "Heaven has bestowed on you," adds Aphra, "two noble branches, whom you have permitted to wear those glorious titles which you yourself generously neglected." Two noble branches indeed they were, if the graver of Blooteling, who wrought while Nelly was alive, has not done more than justice to their looks.

Troubles were now surrounding Nelly. At Paris, in September 1680, died James, Lord Beauclerk, her second and youngest son. In the summer of the succeeding year, Lacy, the actor, was buried in St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, whither she herself was soon to follow. In 1683 died Charles Hart, her old admirer; and in the following year died Major Mohun. A garter and other honours awaited the son of her old rival, the Duchess of Portsmouth. Yet she was still cheerful, and sought even more assiduously for other honours for her only child. Nor was the King unwilling to hearken to the entreaties of Nelly in her boy's behalf. On the

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James Lord [illegible]

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James. Lord Beauclerk.

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10th of January 1683-4, eight days after the death of old Henry Jermyn, Earl of St. Albans, the boy Earl of Burford was created Duke of St. Albans, and appointed to the then lucrative offices of Registrar of the High Court of Chancery and Master Falconer of England. The latter office is still enjoyed by the present Duke of St. Albans.

The only letter of Nelly's composition known to exist relates to this period of her life. It is written on a sheet of very thin gilt-edged paper, in a neat, Italian hand, not her own, and is thus addressed :—

These for Madam Jennings over against the
Tub Tavern in Jermin Street, London.
WINDSOR, BURFORD HOUSE,
Aprill 14, 1684.

MADAM,—I have receiv'd y^r^ Letter, and I desire y^u^ would speake to my Ladie Williams to send me the Gold Stuffe, & a Note with it, because I must sign it, then she shall have her money y^e^ next Day of Mr. Trant; pray tell her Ladieship, that I will send her a Note of what Quantity of Things I 'le have bought, if her Ladieship will put herselfe to y^e^ Trouble to buy them; when they are bought I will sign a Note for her to be payd. Pray Madam, let y^e^ Man goe on with my Sedan, and send Potvin and Mr. Coker down to me, for I want them both. The Bill is very dear to boyle the Plate, but necessity hath noe Law. I am afraid M^m^. you have forgott my Mantle, which you were to line with Musk Colour Sattin, and all my other Things, for you send me noe Patterns nor Answer. Monsieur Lainey is going away. Pray send me word about your son Griffin, for his Majestie is mighty well pleased that he will goe along with my Lord Duke. I am afraid you are so much taken up with your owne House, that you forget my Businesse. My service to dear Lord Kildare, and tell him I love him with all my heart. Pray M^m^. see that Potvin brings now all my Things with him: My Lord Duke's bed, &c. if he hath not made them all up, he may doe that here, for if I doe not get my Things out of his Hands now, I shall not have them until this time twelvemonth. The Duke brought me down with

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him my Crochet of Diamonds; and I love it the better because he brought it. Mr. Lumley and everie body else will tell you that it is the finest Thing that ever was seen. Good M^rs. speake to Mr. Beaver to come down too, that I may bespeake a Ring for the Duke of Grafton before he goes into France.

I have continued extreme ill ever since you leaft me, and I am soe still. I have sent to London for a Dr. I believe I shall die. My service to the Duchess of Norfolk, and tell her, I am as sick as her Grace, but do not know what I ayle, although shee does, which I am overjoyed that shee goes on with her great Belly.

Pray tell my Ladie Williams that the King's Mistresses are accounted ill paymasters, but shee shall have her Money the next Day after I have the stuffe.

Here is a sad slaughter at Windsor, the young mens taking y^r Leaves and going to France, and, although they are none of my Lovers, yet I am loath to part with the men. Mrs. Jennings, I love you with all my Heart and soe good bye.

E. G.

Let me have an Answer to this Letter.

This highly characteristic letter was found by Cole, and transmitted to Walpole, who has expressed the delight he felt at its perusal. Who Madam Jennings was I am not aware; nor have I succeeded in discovering anything of moment about Lady Williams. Potvin was an upholsterer.[1] The

[1] *Privy Purse Expenses of the Reigns of Charles II. and James II.* (printed by the Camden Society), p. 186. "Tho. Otway" and "Jhon Poieteuin" are witnesses to a power of attorney of Nelly's, now in Mr. Robert Cole's possession. [This document—a power of attorney from Nell Gwyn to James Fraizer, of Westminster, to receive her pension of £5000 per annum (dated June 1, 1680)—was printed in 1868 by William Henry Hart, F.S.A., with the title of *A Memorial of Nell Gwynne, the actress, and Thomas Otway, the dramist.* In his *Farewel* Rochester speaking of the spendthrifts of his day writes: "To the more tolerable Alcaid of Alcazzer, One flies from's Creditor, t'other from Frazier." *Works*, ed. 1709, p. 162.]

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Duchess of Norfolk was the daughter and sole heir of Henry Mordaunt, Earl of Peterborough, and Nelly would appear to have been on intimate terms with her. When, on account of Her Grace's illicit intimacy with Sir John Germain, her divorce from the Duke was before a court of law, Nelly's evidence, imperfectly as it has reached us, was very characteristic of her mode of reply even to an ordinary question. Germain had sought, it appears, to seduce her from the King, and Nell is said to have replied, "she was no such sportsman as to lay the dog where the deer should lie." Sir John Germain, afterwards married to the Duchess, was a Dutch adventurer, of mean extraction, grown rich by gambling. The father of Secretary Craggs was footman to the gallant Duchess.

When the Rye House Plot had given to Charles a distaste for Newmarket and Audley End, Charles determined on building a palace at Winchester, and Wren was required to design a structure worthy of the site and the monarch. The works were commenced in earnest, and Charles was often at Winchester watching the progress of the building, and enjoying the sports of the chase in the New Forest, or his favourite relaxation of fishing in the waters of the Itchin. Nelly accompanied him to Winchester, and on one occasion the pious and learned Ken, then a chaplain to the King, and a prebendary of Winchester, was required to surrender his prebendal house as a lodging for Nelly.[1]

[1] Hawkins's *Life of Ken.*

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Ken properly remonstrated, and, if it be indeed true that she had taken possession of the assigned lodging, she speedily removed from it.[1] Nor was the King displeased with the firmness displayed by this exemplary man. He knew that Ken was right; appreciated his motives; and one of his last acts was to make the very person by whom he was thus so properly admonished Bishop of Bath and Wells, the see of which he chose to be conscientiously deprived, as Sancroft from Canterbury, rather than forget the oath he had taken of fealty to a former sovereign.

Unable to obtain or retain the use of the canonical apartments of the pious Ken, Nelly found quarters in a small detached room of brick at the end of the large drawing-room in the Deanery, still from tradition called "Nell Gwyn," and afterwards at Avington, the seat of a Countess of Shrewsbury, notorious for the part she took in the duel in which her husband was slain by Villiers, Duke of Buckingham. Avington lies about three miles to the north-east of Winchester, and before the death of the last Duke of Chandos Nelly's dressing-room was still shown.[3] Another attraction of the same house was a fine characteristic portrait, by Lely, of the Countess of Shrewsbury as Minerva, recently sold at the sale at

[1] The tradition at Winchester was, that Nell refused to move, and did not move, till part of the roof was taken off.—Bowles's *Life of Ken*, ii. 7.

[2] Bowles's *Life of Ken*, ii. 56.

[3] Forster's *Stowe Catalogue*, p. 179.

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Stowe, whither it had been removed from Avington with the rest of the Chandos property.

Ken's refusal occurred, I see reason to think, during the last visit which Nelly was to make to Winchester. The following winter was spent by the Court at Whitehall, amid gaieties common to that festive season; and what these gaieties were like we may learn from the picture of a Sunday preserved by Evelyn. "I can never forget," writes the high-minded author of *Sylva*, "the inexpressible luxury and profaneness, gaming, and all dissoluteness, and, as it were, a total forgetfulness of God (it being Sunday evening), which this day se'nnight I was witness of; the King sitting and toying with his concubines, Portsmouth, Cleveland, Mazarine, etc., a French boy singing love-songs in that glorious gallery, whilst about twenty of the great courtiers and other dissolute persons were at basset round a large table, a bank of at least £2000 in gold before them; upon which two gentlemen who were with me made strange reflections. Six days after all was in the dust."[1] The fatal termination of this Sunday scene was even more sudden than Evelyn has described. The revels extended over Sunday night until the next morning. At eight of that same morning the King swooned away in his chair, and lay for nearly two hours in a state of apoplexy, all his physicians despairing of his recovery. Charles rallied for a time, regained possession of his intellects, and died, on the following

[1] Evelyn, Feb. 4, 1684-5.

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Friday, sensible of his sins, and seeking forgiveness from his Maker. His end was that of a man, never repining that it was so sudden; and his good-nature was exhibited on his death-bed in a thousand particulars. Charles sought pardon from his Queen, forgiveness from his brother, and the excuses of those who stood about his bed. What his last words were, is, I believe, unknown; but his dying requests made to his brother and successor concluded with, "Let not poor Nelly starve";[1] a recommendation, says Fox, in his famous introductory chapter, that is much to his honour.

That Charles II. was poisoned was the belief of many at the time. It was the fashion in that, as in the preceding age, to attribute the sudden death of any great person to poison, and the rumour on this occasion should, we suppose, form no exception to the rule of vulgar delusions. Yet in Charles's case the suspicions are not without support from apparently rather weighty authorities. "I am obliged to observe," says Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham, "that the most knowing and the most deserving of all his physicians did not only believe him poisoned, but thought himself so too, not long after, for having declared his opinion a little too boldly."[2] Bishop Patrick strengthens the supposition, from the testimony of Sir Thomas

[1] Burnet, ed. 1823, ii. 460. Evelyn, Feb. 4, 1684-5. [Some graphic letters descriptive of Charles's illness and death are in the *Hatton Correspondence*, Camd. Soc., vol. ii., pp. 51–54.]

[2] Buckingham's *Works*, 8vo, 1729, ii. 82.

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Millington, who sat with the King for three days, and never went to bed for three nights.[1] *The* Chesterfield, who lived among many who were likely to be well informed, and was himself the grandson of the Earl of Chesterfield who was with Charles at his death, states positively that the King was poisoned.[2] The Duchess of Portsmouth, when in England, in 1699, is said to have told Lord Chancellor Cowper that Charles II. was poisoned at her house by one of her footmen in a dish of chocolate,[3] and Fox had heard a somewhat similar report from the family of his mother, who was great-granddaughter to the Duchess.[4] The supposed parallel cases of the deaths of Henry, Prince of Wales, and King James I. are supported by no testimony so strong as that advanced in the case of Charles II.

Had the King lived, Nelly was to have had a peerage for herself, and the title chosen was that of Countess of Greenwich.[5] This of course she

[1] Bishop Patrick's *Autobiography*, p. 101.
[2] *Letters to his Son.*
[3] Dean Cowper in Spence's *Anecdotes*, ed. Singer, p. 367.
[4] Fox, p. 67.
[5] This I give on the authority of the curious passage in a MS. book by Van Bossen, kindly placed at my disposal by Mr. David Laing. The whole passage is as follows:—

"Charles the 2d. naturall sone of King Charles the 2d. borne of Hellenor or Nelguine, dawghter to Thomas Guine, a capitane of ane antient family in Wales, who showld bein advanced to be Countes of Greeniez, but hindered by the king's death, and she lived not long after his Matie. Item, he was advanced to the title of Duke Stablane and Earle of Berward. He is not married."—*The Royall Cedar*, by Frederick Van Bossen, MS. folio, 1688, p. 129.

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was not now likely to obtain—if indeed she would have cared so to do. Her own end was near.

One of the last acts of the antiquarian life of that curious inquirer, Mr. Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, was to note down some valuable memoranda for this story of Nell Gwyn. Among other things, Mr. Sharpe directed Mr. Laing's attention to the curious entry in the volume by Van Bossen, still in Mr. Laing's possession.

[So Rochester in *The Royal Angler:*—"Buckingham shall be restor'd, Nelly a Countess, Lory be a Lord." *Works*, ed. 1709, p. 149.]

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CHAPTER VIII.

Nelly in real mourning, and outlawed for debt—Death of Otway, tutor to her son—James II. pays her debts—The King's kindness occasions a groundless rumour that she has gone to mass—Her intimacy with Dr. Tenison, then Vicar of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, and Dr. Lower, the celebrated physician—She sends for Tenison in her last illness—Her death and contrite end—Her will and last request of her son—Her funeral—Tenison preaches her funeral sermon—False account of the sermon cried by hawkers in the streets—The sermon used as an argument against Tenison's promotion to the See of Lincoln—Queen Mary's defence of him and of Nelly—Her son the Duke of St. Albans—Eleanor Gwyn and Harriet Mellon—Various portraits of Nelly—Further anecdotes—Conclusion.

IT was no fictitious mourning, for the Cham or Tartary or a Prince of France, which Nelly and the Duchess of Portsmouth were both wearing in the spring of 1685. Each had occasion, though on very unequal grounds, to lament the monarch so suddenly removed from his gorgeous chambers at Whitehall to the cold damp vaults of Westminster Abbey. It was at this period, if not on other

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occasions, that Nelly must have called to mind Shirley's noble song, which old Bowman used to sing to King Charles :—

> The glories of our blood and state
> Are shadows, not substantial things ;
> There is no armour against fate :
> Death lays his icy hands on kings.

Lely should have painted Nelly in her mourning ; but the delicate hand which drew with so much grace the Beauties of King Charles the Second's Court, and Nelly with her lamb among them, was lying torpid under the church in Covent Garden, and the painters who succeeded him, Wissing, Kneller, and Verelst, had little skill in transferring from life to canvas those essential graces of expression which Lely caught so inimitably in his La Belle Hamilton and his Madame Gwyn.

While her grief was still fresh, Nelly had occasion to remember the friend she had lost. The King's mistresses, as Nelly herself informs us, were accounted but ill paymasters, for the King himself was often at a loss for money, and the ladies were, we may safely suppose, generally in advance of the allowances assigned them. The "gold stuff" was indeed scarcer than ever with her in the spring of the year in which the King died, and we know what became of at least some of her plate only a year before. "The bill is very dear," she says, "to boil the plate ; but necessity hath no law." What was to be done? shopkeepers were pressing with their bills, and the apprentices who would at once have released "Protestant Nelly" from

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their own books had no control over those of their masters; so Nelly, if not actually arrested for debt in the spring of 1685, was certainly outlawed for the non-payment of certain bills, for which some of her tradespeople, since the death of the King, had become perseveringly clamorous.

Nelly's resources at this period were slender enough. In the King's lifetime, and after Prince Rupert's death, she had paid to Peg Hughes the actress and her daughter Ruperta as much as £4520 "for the great pearl necklace" which she wears in so many of her portraits.[1] This would now probably pass to the neck of another mistress (such is the lottery of life and jewels)—perhaps to that of Katherine Sedley, Countess of Dorchester; but Nelly would not care much about this: it went more to her heart to hear that during her own outlawry for debt her old friend Otway, the tutor of her son—the poet, whose writings she must have loved—had died of starvation, without a sympathising Nelly near at hand to relieve the wants in which she herself was now participating.[2]

It was Nelly's good fortune, however, never to be without a friend willing and able to assist her. The new King had not forgotten the dying request of his only brother, "Let not poor Nelly starve": above all, he had not forgotten Nelly's conduct during that hard period of his life when the Bill of Exclusion was pushed in both Houses with a warmth

[1] Warburton's *Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, iii. 558.
[2] Otway died April 14, 1685. He dedicated his *Venice Preserved* to the Duchess of Portsmouth.

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and animosity which argued indifferently for his obtaining the crown to which he was entitled. James, though in trouble himself—Monmouth had landed at Lyme, and the battle of Sedgemoor was not yet fought—found time in the midst of his anxieties to attend to his brother's last request; the secret service expenses of the King (only recently brought to light) exhibiting a payment to Richard Graham, Esq., of £729 2*s.* 3*d.* "to be by him paid over to the several tradesmen, creditors of Mrs. Ellen Gwyn, in satisfaction of their debts for which the said Ellen stood outlawed."[1]

Nor was this the only way in which James exhibited his regard for Nelly, and his remembrance of a brother to whom he was sincerely attached. In the same year in which he relieved Nelly from her outlawry, two additional payments of £500 each were made to her by way of royal bounty; and two years afterwards the same book of accounts records a payment to Sir Stephen Fox of £1256 0*s.* 2*d.* for so much by him paid to Sir Robert Clayton, the alderman and great city merchant, in full of £3774 2*s.* 6*d.* for redeeming the mortgages to Sir John Musters, of Bestwood Park, for settling the same for life upon Mrs. Ellen Gwyn, "and after her death upon the Duke of St. Albans, and his issue male, with the reversion in the crown."[2] Bestwood Park is in the county of Nottingham, on the borders of merry Sherwood, and was long an

[1] *Secret Service Expenses of Charles II. and James II.* (printed for the Camden Society), p. 109.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 167.

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appurtenance to the Crown, eagerly sought for by royal favourites. Whether it remains in the possession of the present Duke of St. Albans, as the descendant of Nelly, I am not aware.

James's kindness to Nelly, and his known design of reconciling the nation to the Church of Rome, gave rise to a rumour, perpetuated by Evelyn in his *Diary*, that she at this time "was said to go to mass." He alludes to her conversion in the same brief entry with that of Dryden:—"Such proselytes," he adds, "were of no great loss to the Church."[1] The rumour as to her, however, was untrue. Nelly was firm to the Protestant religion—so firm, indeed, that her adherence to the faith of our fathers is one of the marked characteristics of her life.

Some strict disciplinarians of the Church will hear perhaps with a smile that Nell Gwyn was troubled at any time with a thought about religion. But their incredulity is uncharitable. Nelly doubtless had her moments of remorse; and, though her warmth in the cause of Protestantism may, in the first instance, have been strengthened by her hatred to the Duchess of Portsmouth, yet the kindly feeling avowed for her by Tenison affords surely a strong presumption that her faith was unshaken and her repentance sincere.

It is much to be regretted that we know so little of the life of Archbishop Tenison. He seems to have risen into importance about the year 1680,

[1] Evelyn, January 19, 1685-6.

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when he was recommended by Tillotson to the vacant living of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, in London, then an extensive parish, where, as Baxter described it, "neighbours lived like Americans, without hearing a sermon for many years." Tenison filled his cure at St. Martin's with so much courage, toleration, and discretion in the worst days of the Church, that few, except the extreme partisans of Popery, have been found to quarrel with his ministry.[1] It was as vicar of St. Martin's, in which parish Pall Mall is situated, that he became acquainted with Nell Gwyn,—perhaps, as I suspect, in the first instance, through the instrumentality of Lower, then the most celebrated physician in London.[2] Dr. Lower was a sturdy Protestant, and one, as King James was known to observe, "that did him more mischief than a troop of horse." He was often with Nelly, and, as Kennet had heard from Tenison's own lips, "would pick out of her all the intrigues of the Court of King Charles II." Nor was his faith questionable, evincing as he did his regard for the Reformation by the bequest of a thousand pounds to the French and Irish Protestants in or near London.[3]

But the visits of Lower to Nelly were not for gossip only. She was now far from well, and her

[1] Compare Burnet in his *History* with Lord Dartmouth's *Notes*, and Burnet's own account of Tenison to King William in Romney's *Diary*, ii. 283. See also Evelyn's *Diary* for a high character of Tenison.

[2] Burnet, ed. 1823, ii. 284.

[3] Kennet's note in Wood's *Ath. Ox.*, ed. Bliss, iv. 299.

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complaints were put into rhyme by the satirical pen of Sir George Etherege. There is, however, little wit in this instance, and just as little truth in the malice of the author of "The Man of Mode." One line, however, deserves to be recorded:

Send Dr. Burnet to me or I die.

It was time indeed for Nelly to send for some one. Burnet had attended Rochester, and Mrs. Roberts, and the Whig "martyr," Lord William Russell. Tenison had attended Thynne,[1] Sir Thomas Armstrong,[2] and the unhappy Monmouth. Tenison was sent for, and attended Nelly.

She now made her will, and to the following effect:—

In the name of God, Amen. I, Ellen Gwynne, of the parish of St. Martin-in-the-fields, and county of Middlesex, spinster, this 9th day of July, anno Domini 1687, do make this my last will and testament, and do revoke all former wills. First, in hopes of a joyful resurrection, I do recommend myself whence I came, my soul into the hands of

[1] Thomas Thynne of Longleat, Wilts (born 1648) was attacked in his coach in Pall Mall (near the site of the present United Service Club), on the evening of Sunday, 12 February, 1682, and expired on the Monday. His wealth, attested by the popular sobriquet "Tom of Ten Thousand," seems to have been almost his sole claim to consideration (*Dict. Nat. Biog.*).

Tenison also ministered to the notorious informer Edward Turberville when dying of small-pox in Dec. 1681 (*Hist. MSS. Comm.* 10th Report, Appendix iv. 174).—G. G.

[2] Sir Thomas Armstrong (born about 1624) was embroiled in the Rye House Plot and fled to Leyden, but was brought back to England loaded with irons, denied his trial, and executed 20 June, 1684. At the scaffold he was met by Tenison, who took charge of a written paper he gave him protesting his innocence (*Dict. Nat. Biog.*).—G. G.

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Almighty God, and my body unto the earth, to be decently buried, at the discretion of my executors, hereinafter named; and as for all such houses, lands, tenements, offices, places, pensions, annuities, and hereditaments whatsoever, in England, Ireland, or elsewhere, wherein I, or my heirs, or any to the use of, or in trust for me or my heirs, hath, have, or may or ought to have, any estate, right, claim, or demand whatsoever, of fee-simple or freehold, I give and devise the same all and wholly to my dear natural son, his Grace the Duke of St. Albans, and to the heirs of his body; and as for all and all manner of my jewels, plate, household stuff, goods, chattels, credits, and other estate whatsoever, I give and bequeath the same, and every part and parcel thereof, to my executors hereafter named, in, upon, and by way of trust for my said dear son, his executors, administrators, and assigns, and to and for his and their own sole and peculiar benefit and advantage, in such manner as is hereafter expressed; and I do hereby constitute the Right Hon. Lawrence, Earl of Rochester, the Right Hon. Thomas, Earl of Pembroke, the Hon. Sir Robert Sawyer, Knight, his Majesty's Attorney-General, and the Hon. Henry Sidney, Esq., to be my executors of this my last will and testament, desiring them to please to accept and undertake the execution hereof, in trust as afore-mentioned; and I do give and bequeath to the several persons in the schedule hereunto annexed the several legacies and sums of money therein expressed or mentioned; and my further will and mind (anything above notwithstanding) is, that if my said dear son happen to depart this natural life without issue then living, or such issue die without issue, then and in such case, all and all manner of my estate above devised to him, and in case my said natural son die before the age of one-and-twenty years, then also all my personal estate devised to my said executors not before then by my said dear son and his issue, and my said executors, and the executors or administrators of the survivor of them, or by some of them otherwise lawfully and firmly devised or disposed of, shall remain, go, or be to my said executors, their heirs, executors, and administrators respectively, in trust of and for answering, paying, and satisfying all and every and all manner of my gifts, legacies, and directions that at any time hereafter, during my life, shall be by me anywise mentioned or given in or by any codicils or schedules to be hereto annexed. And lastly, that my said executors shall have, all and every of them, 100*l.* a-piece, of lawful money, in consideration

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of their care and trouble herein, and furthermore, all their several and respective expenses and charges in and about the execution of this my will. In witness of all which, I hereunto set my hand and seal, the day and year first above written. E. G.

Signed, sealed, published, and declared, in the presence of us, who at the same time subscribe our names, also in her presence.

LUCY HAMILTON SANDYS,
EDWARD WYBORNE,
JOHN WARNER,
WILLIAM SCARBOROUGH,
JAMES BOOTH.

To this, three months later, was added a codicil written on a separate sheet of paper, and called :—

The last request of Mrs. Ellenr Gwinn to his Grace the Duke of St. Albans, made October the 18th, 1687.

1. I desire I may be buried in the chancel of St. Martin's-in-the-fields.

2. That Dr. Tenison may preach my funeral sermon.

3. That there may be a decent pulpit-cloth and cushion given to St. Martin's-in-the-fields.

4. That he [the Duke] would give one hundred pounds for the use of the poor of the said St. Martin's and St. James', Westminster, to be given into the hands of the said Dr. Tenison to be disposed at his discretion, for taking any poor debtors of the said parish out of prison, and for cloaths this winter, and other necessaries, as he shall find most fit.

5. That for showing my charity to those who differ from me in religion, I desire that fifty pounds may be put into the hands of Dr. Tenison and Mr. Warner, who, taking to them any two persons of the Roman Religion, may dispose of it for the use of the poor of that religion inhabiting in the parish of St. James aforesaid.

6. That Mrs. Rose Forster may have two hundred pounds given her, any time within a year after my decease.

7. That Jo., my porter, may have ten pounds given him.

My request to his Grace is, further—

8. That my present nurses may have ten pounds each, and mourning, besides their wages due to them.

9. That my present servants may have mourning each, and a year's wages, besides their wages due.

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10. That the Lady Fairborne may have fifty pounds given her to buy a ring.

11. That my kinsman, Mr. Cholmly, may have one hundred pounds given to him, within a year after this date.

12. That His Grace would please to lay out twenty pounds yearly for the releasing of poor debtors out of prison every Christmas-day.

13. That Mr. John Warner may have fifty pounds given him to buy a ring.

14. That the Lady Hollyman may have the pension of ten shillings per week continued to her during the said lady's life.

Oct. 18, —87.—*This request was attested and acknowledged, in the presence of us,*

JOHN HETHERINGTON,
HANNAH GRACE,
DANIEL DYER.[1]

She died of apoplexy in November 1687,[2] in her thirty-eighth [thirty-seventh] year, but the exact day is unknown. "Her repentance in her last hours, I have been unquestionably informed," writes Cibber, "appeared in all the contrite symptoms of a Christian sincerity." "She is said to have died piously and penitently," writes Wigmore to Sir George Etherege, then Envoy at Ratisbon, "and, as she dispensed several charities in her lifetime, so she left several legacies at her death."[3] The

[1] The will was proved, Dec. 7, at the Prerogative Will Office in Doctors' Commons, and the original on the 18th of February following, delivered to Sir Robert Sawyer, the King's Attorney-General, one of the executors.

[2] Letter of March 22, 1687, in Ellis's *Correspondence*, i. 264: "Mrs. Nelly is dying of an apoplexy." ["'Tis said Nell Guin is dead" (Letter of Alice Hatton, March 26, 1687, in *Hatton Correspondence*, Camd. Soc., vol. ii. p. 67). Her death took place on Nov. 14, 1687, as recorded by Luttrell (*Brief Relation of State Affairs*, i. 420).]

[3] Cibber's *Apology*, ed. 1740, p. 451. Letter of Nov. 18, 1687, in Seward's *Anecdotes*. Her wealth in the letter is stated at a million.

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bequest to the poor prisoners may receive some illustration from the satires of the time. Her father is said to have died in a prison at Oxford—and Nelly, it is added, "gloried" in relieving the necessities of the poorer prisoners.

On the night of the 17th of November 1687, the orange-girl in the playhouse pit—the pretty witty Nelly of Pepys—and the Almahide of Dryden's play and King Charles's admiration, was buried, according to her own request, in the church of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields. There was no great ostentation considering the style in which funerals were then commonly conducted; the expenses of her interment, £375, were advanced by Sir Stephen Fox, from the next quarter's allowance of £1500 a year, which King James had settled upon her.[1] Good Dr. Tenison too complied with her request, and preached her funeral sermon; but what the Doctor said—except that he said "much to her praise"—no one has told us. The church was crowded—all the apprentices who could obtain leave from their masters for such a lesson were there, and many a wet eye was seen,—for Nelly was a good subject for a sermon, and the then vicar of St. Martin's was an impressive preacher.

It was bold in Tenison to preach such a sermon,

[1] *Secret Service Expenses of Charles II. and James II.*, p. 177. [The entry is as follows: "To Roger Hewitt, upon the like sume that would have become due at Xtmas last to Mrs. Ellinor Gwynn, dec'd on a penc'on of 1500*li* per ann. in the name of Francis Gwynne, Esq., to reimburse so much money paid by S^r^ Stephen Fox for the funeral of the said Mrs. Gwynn, 375*li* 0. 0."]

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and on such a person; but he knew the worth of Nelly, and was not afraid. He escaped not, however, without censure. Some mercenary people printed and employed hawkers to cry in the streets a sham, or largely transmogrified discourse which the vicar himself was obliged to denounce as a "forgery."[1] Others went further; and when in 1691 the see of Lincoln was vacant, and Tenison was all but appointed to it, Viscount Villiers, afterwards the first Earl of Jersey, in his zeal for the rector of the parish of St. Giles's-in-the-Fields, immediately adjoining St. Martin's, made it a reason to Queen Mary for the exclusion of the honest Doctor that he had preached "a notable funeral sermon in praise of Ellen Gwyn." But the daughter of King James, and the wife of King William, who had her own channels of information, was not to be led aside from what she knew was right by so weak a complaint, though advanced by a highly-favoured servant of her own. "I have heard as much," said the good Queen Mary to her Master of the Horse, "and this is a sign that the poor unfortunate woman died penitent; for, if I have read a man's heart through his looks, had she not made a truly pious end, the Doctor could never have been induced to speak well of her."[2] I need

[1] *Advertisement.*—Whereas there has been a Paper cry'd by some Hawkers, as a Sermon preached by *D.* T. at the funeral of *M.* E. Gwynn, this may Certify, that that Paper is the Forgery of some Mercinary people.—*Mr.* [Andrew] *Pulton consider'd* [*in his sincerity . . .*] *by Tho. Tenison, D.D.*, 4to, 1687.

[2] *Life of Tenison*, p. 20. Lord Jersey should have recol-

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hardly add that Tenison obtained the see, and that he lived to fill with honour to himself and service to the Church the more important office of Archbishop of Canterbury. It may, however, be new to some that in his own Will he strictly forbids either funeral sermon or oration at his own interment. There is satire in this. To have praised even Tenison might by some courtier or another have been made a barrier to the promotion of an able, and perhaps better deserving person.

The son acceded to the dying requests of his mother by the following memorandum beneath the codicil :—

Dec. 5, 1687.—I doe consent that this paper of request may be made a codicil to Mrs. Gwinn's will.

ST. ALBANS.

King James continued the mother's pension to the son, and in the same month in which his mother died gave him the colonelcy of that regiment of horse from which Lord Scarsdale had been dismissed, for his opposition to the well-known designs of King James.[1]

When still young he distinguished himself at the siege of Belgrade, became in after-life a Knight of the Garter, and died the father of eight sons by his

---

lected that the father of his own wife was no less a person than the infamous Will. Chiffinch. [The first Earl of Jersey, then Sir Edward Villiers, married Barbara Chiffinch in Dec. 1681 (Chester's *London Marriage Licences*, ed. Foster). He was created Earl of Jersey Oct. 13, 1697.]

[1] Letter from Atterbury, dated Covent Garden, Dec. 1, 1687. Nichols's *Atterbury*, i. 1.

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wife, the high-born and wealthy heiress, Lady Diana de Vere, a beauty included—as I have already observed—in the Kneller collection at Hampton Court. He died intestate in 1726. His widow survived till 1742. The title still exists—and has been in our own time rather conspicuously before the public from the enormous wealth of the late Harriet, Duchess of St. Albans, widow of Coutts the banker, but originally known, and favourably too, upon the comic boards. Not unlike in many points were Eleanor Gwyn and Harriet Mellon. The fathers of both were in the army, and both never knew what it was to have a father. Both rose by the stage,—both had wealthy admirers—and both were charitable and generous. Here, however, the parallel ceases. Harriet was no wit, —nor, with all respects for Mr. Coutts's taste, can we well believe that she had ever been a beauty.

There are many portraits of Nell Gwyn—few heads of her time make a more profitable traffic among dealers. Yet very few are genuine. She sat to Lely, to Cooper, and to Gascar. An "unfinished" portrait of her was sold at Sir Peter Lely's sale to Hugh May for £25.[1] No. 306 of King James II.'s pictures was "Madam Gwyn's picture, naked, with a Cupid," done by Lely, and concealed by a "sliding piece," a copy by Danckers of the Countess of Dorset, by Van Dyck.[2] Among the

[1] Accounts of Roger North, the executor of Lely. *Addit. MS.* in Brit. Mus. 16,174.

[2] *Harl. MS.* 1890; compare Walpole, edit. Dallaway, iii. 58. There is a unique print of this in the Burney Collection in the British Museum.

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pictures "of Mr. Lely's doing" which Mrs. Beale, the painter, saw at Bap. May's lodgings at Whitehall, in April 1677, was "Mrs. Gwyn, with a lamb, half-length."[1] "Some years since," says Tom Davies, writing in 1784, "I saw at Mr. Berenger's house in the Mews a picture of Nell Gwyn, said to have been drawn by Sir Peter Lely; she appeared to have been extremely attractive."[2]

With a single exception of a too grave and thoughtful picture in the Lely room at Hampton Court, there is not a single picture of Nelly in any of the royal collections. When Queen Charlotte was asked whether she recollected a famous picture of Nell Gwyn, known to have existed in the Windsor gallery, and which Her Majesty herself was suspected of having removed, she replied at once "that most assuredly since *she* had resided at Windsor there had been no Nell Gwyn there."[3]

A full-length portrait of her, in a yellow and blue dress, and black-brown hair, fetched at the Stowe sale 100 guineas, and has been engraved. At Goodwood is a full-length of her, neither clever nor like. Other portraits of her are to be seen at Elvaston (Lord Harrington's); at Althorp (Lord Spencer's); at Welbeck (the Duke of Portland's), in water colours, with her two children; at Sudbury (Lord Vernon's); and at Oakley Grove, Cirencester (Lord Bathurst's). That curious inquirer, Sir

[1] *Wal pole*, by Dallaway, iii. 140.
[2] Davies's *Dramatic Miscellanies*, iii. 269.
[3] Mrs. Jameson's Preface to *Beauties of the Court of King harles II.*

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William Musgrave, had seen portraits of her at Smeaton and at Lord Portmore's at Weybridge. At the Garrick Club is a namby-pamby and pretty small portrait called Nell Gwyn, but surely not Nelly. Marshall Grosvenor had the fine portrait with the lamb, once belonging to the St. Albans family, and since so finely engraved for Mrs. Jameson's Beauties. "The turn of the neck," says Mrs. Jameson, "and the air of the head, are full of grace and character, and the whole picture, though a little injured by time, is exquisitely painted." A duplicate of this is at Goodrich Court—one of the acquisitions of Sir Samuel Meyrick—the petticoat is of a pink or carmine colour. The portrait at Drayton Manor, bought by the late Sir Robert Peel, is also the same as the Grosvenor picture, except that the lamb is omitted.[1] At Mr. Bernal's, in Eaton Square, is a clever copy of the time, after Lely; and among the miniatures of the Duke of Buccleuch is her head by Cooper, for which it is said the Exchequer papers record the price paid to that painter.

Of the early engravings from her portraits, the best are by Gerard Valck, the brother-in-law of Blooteling. Valck was a contemporary of Nell Gwyn, and fine impressions of his Lely engraving realise high prices; but the print of her which collectors are most curious about is that after Gascar, evidently engraved abroad,—it is thought by Masson—in which she is represented covered

[1] Mrs. Jameson's *Private Picture Galleries*, p. 375.

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by the famous laced chemise, lying on a bed of roses, from which her two children, as Cupids, are withdrawing the curtains—King Charles II. in the distance. She wears as well the famous Rupert necklace of pearls. The Stowe impression—the last sold—brought eight guineas. The Burney copy, now in the British Museum, cost Dr. Burney at Sir Egerton Brydges' sale £39 18s. In all her pictures we have what Ben Jonson so much admires—

Hair loosely flowing, robes as free.

But few—the Lely with the lamb excepted—render justice to those charms of face and figure which her contemporaries loved to admire, and which Lely alone had the skill to transfer even in part to canvas.[1]

Relics of Nelly are of rare occurrence. A warming-pan said to have been in her possession with, for motto, the slightly modified text, "Fear God and *serve* the King," was in existence at the close of the last century. A looking-glass of great elegance of form, and with a handsomely carved frame with figures, lately, if not still, in the collection of Sir Page Dicks of Port Hall, is said, on good authority, to have belonged to her. The bills of her household and other expenses, from which I have derived some particulars, are characteristic

[1] For her bust or effigy at Bagnigge Wells, see Waldron's ed. of *Downes*, p. 16, and *Gent. Mag.* for June, 1835, p. 562. I do not believe in the straight-armed portrait engraved by Van Bleeck and now in Mr. Bernal's possession.

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memorials of her in another way. Till the recent sale of the mutilated Exchequer papers her autograph was not known to exist. She could not sign her name, and was content with an E. G.—many with better opportunities could do no more—dotted at the commencement and termination of each letter, as if she was at a loss where to begin and how to leave off. Not more than ten or twelve of her signatures are known, and these when they have occurred for sale have sold at prices varying from two guineas and a half to three guineas each.

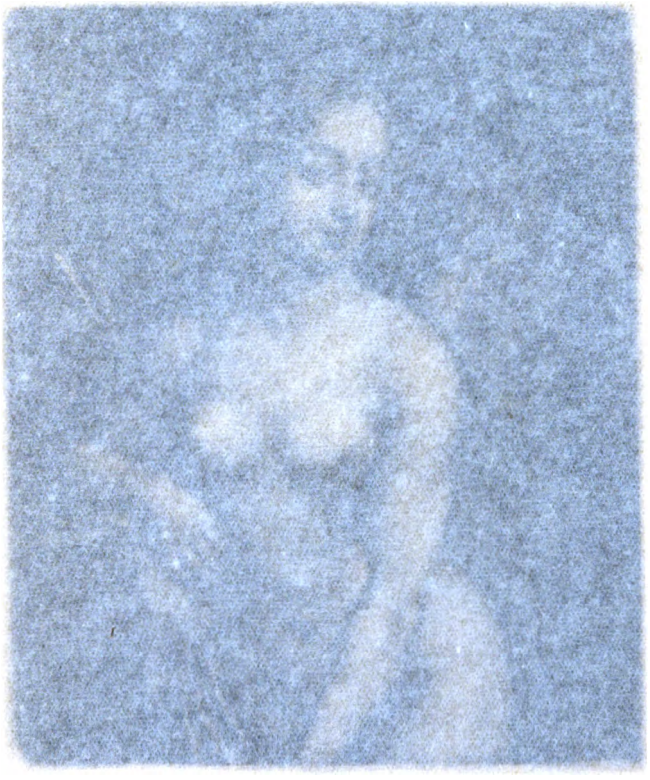


On looking back at what I have written of this Story, I see little to omit or add—unless I wander into the satires of the time, and poison my pages with the gross libels of an age of lampoons. Not to have occasioned one satire, or even more, would have been to say little for the reputation (of any kind) of a lady who lived within the atmosphere of Whitehall. Like her—

> Who missed her name in a lampoon,
> And sigh'd—to find herself decay'd so soon—

Nelly did not escape, and, though the subject of

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...orials of her in another way. Till the recent ...e of the mutilated Exchequer papers her auto... ...ph was not known to exist. She could not sign ... name, and was content with an E. G. ... with be... ...ties could do no more—dotted ... the ... ...t and termination of each ... ... was at a loss where to begin and how to ... ... Not more than ten or twelve of h... ...es are known, and these when th... ... ...red for sale have sold at prices varying, ... two guineas and a half to three guineas each.



...at I have written of this ... or add—unless I wander ... time, and poison my pages ... of an age of lampoons. Not ... ... or even more, would ... ... reputation (of any ... within the atmosphere ...

And ... came in a teaspoon,
... decay'd so soon—

Nelly di... ... and, though the subject of

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Nell Gwyn as Cupid.

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some very gross satires, she had this consolation, if she heeded them at all, that there were others who fared still worse, and perhaps deserved better.[1] Yet it would be wrong to close any sketch of her life without mentioning the present of the large Bible which she made to Oliver Cromwell's porter, when a prisoner in Bedlam,—often referred to by the writers of her age ;[2] her paying the debt of a worthy clergyman whom, as she was going through the City, she saw bailiffs hurrying to prison ; or her present to Pat O'Bryan, so characteristically related in the following quotation :—

> Afterwards Pat O'Bryan, scorning to rob on foot, he would become an absolute highway-man, by robbing on horseback. The first prey he met was Nell Gwyn ; and stopping her coach on the road to Winchester, quoth he, "Madam, I am, by my salvashion, a fery good shentleman, and near relation to his Majesty's Grash, the Duke of Ormond ; but being in want of money, and knowing you to be a sharitable w——, I hope you will give me shomething after I've took all you have away." Honest Nell, seeing the simplicity of the fellow, and laughing heartily at his bull, gave him ten guineas, with which Teague rid away, without doing any further damage.[3]

Anecdotes of this sort, though perhaps only coloured with truth, are not to be made light of by

[1] Wycherley has "A Song : upon a vain foolish Coxcomb, who was banish'd the Court, for owning a witty Libel written by another."—*Poems*, 1704, p. 319.

[2] Granger, iv. 210 and 188. "Like Oliver's porter, but not so devout," is a line in D'Urfey's Prologue to *Sir Barnaby Whigg*, 1681. [Andrew Marvell has also introduced into his verse the story of Nelly's kindness to Cromwell's tall porter, Darriel; cf. *State Poems*, edit. 1705, p. 447.]

[3] Capt. Alexander Smith's *Lives of Highwaymen* (London, 1719), i. 260.

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biographers. They show the general appreciation at the time of the individuals to whom they relate. There is not a story told of Nelly in the commonest chap-book or jest-book, published while her memory was yet fresh among the children to whose fathers and mothers she was known, but what evinces either harmless humour or a sympathising heart. No wonder, then, that there is still an odd fascination about her name, and that Granger's sentence, "Whatever she did became her," is at least as worthy of credit as Burnet's in calling her "the indiscreetest and wildest creature that ever was in a court."[1]

The true apology for this Story and for Nell Gwyn is to be found in Cibber's defence of his own conduct, where, when speaking of Nelly, he observes: "If the common fame of her may be believed, which in my memory was not doubted, she had less to be laid to her charge than any other of those ladies who were in the same state of preferment. She never meddled in matters of any serious moment, or was the tool of working politicians. Never broke into those amorous infidelities which others are accused of; but was as visibly distinguished by her particular personal inclination for the King as her rivals were by their titles and grandeur."[2]

Another, if another is wanting, may be found in a far graver author, Sir Thomas More. "I doubt not,"—says that great and good man,—"that some

[1] Burnet, ed. 1823, i. 457.
[2] Cibber's *Apology*, ed. 1740, p. 450.

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shall think *this woman* (he is writing of Jane Shore) too slight a thing to be written of and set among the remembrances of great matters; but meseemeth," he adds, "the chance worthy to be remembered—for, where the King took displeasure she would mitigate and appease his mind; where men were out of favour she would bring them in his grace; for many that had highly offended she obtained pardon; of great forfeitures she gat men remission; and, finally, in many weighty suits she stood more in great stead."—Wise and virtuous Thomas More,—pious and manly Thomas Tenison,—pretty and witty—and surely with much that was good in her—ELEANOR GWYN.[1]

[1] I have great pleasure in extracting the following defence of Nelly from the preface to Douglas Jerrold's drama of *Nell Gwynne, or The Prologue*, a capitally-constructed piece, and one true throughout to its heroine and the manners of the age in which Nelly lived: "Whilst we may safely reject as unfounded gossip many of the stories associated with the name of Nell Gwynne, we cannot refuse belief to the various proofs of kind-heartedness, liberality, and—taking into consideration her subsequent power to do harm—absolute goodness of a woman mingling (if we may believe a passage in Pepys) from her earliest years in the most depraved scenes of a most dissolute age. The life of Nell Gwynne, from the time of her connection with Charles II. to that of her death, proved that error had been forced upon her by circumstances, rather than indulged from choice. It was under this impression that the present little comedy was undertaken: under this conviction an attempt has been made to show some glimpses of the 'silver lining' of a character, to whose influence over an unprincipled voluptuary we owe a national asylum for veteran soldiers, and whose brightness shines with the most amiable lustre in many actions of her life, and in the last disposal of her worldly effects."

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[Jerrold produced his play in 1833. He stated in the preface that he was induced to write it by reading in Waldron's edition of Downes's *Roscius Anglicanus* (1789) an account of Nell Gwyn speaking the prologue to the first part of Dryden's *Almanzor and Almahide, or the Conquest of Granada by the Spaniards*, in a broad-brimmed hat as big as a cart-wheel and a waist-belt. The story is as follows: "At the Duke's theatre, Nokes appeared in a hat larger than Pistol's, which took the town wonderful, and supported a bad play by its fine effect. Dryden, piqued at this, caused a hat to be made the circumference of a timber coach wheel; and as Nelly was low of stature, and what the French call *mignonne* or *piquante*, he made her speak under the umbrella of that hat, the brims thereof being spread out horizontally to their full extension. The whole theatre was in a convulsion of applause, nay, the very actors giggled, a circumstance none had observed before. Judge, therefore, what a condition the merriest Prince alive was in at such a conjuncture! 'Twas beyond *odso* and *ods fish*, for he wanted little of being suffocated with laughter."

The year 1900 witnessed a decided Nell Gwyn boom in the dramatic world. Two plays, with Nelly for heroine, were produced within a few days of each other in the early autumn. On August 21 Miss Marie Tempest made a hit at the Prince of Wales's theatre, as the royal favourite in *English Nell*, founded by Messrs. Anthony Hope and Edward Rose on the former's novel, *Simon Dale*. Nine days afterwards at the Haymarket Miss Julia Neilson won warm approval in the title-rôle of Paul Kester's *Sweet Nell of Old Drury*, as did Miss Ada Rehan when the play was performed in America.]

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NOTES

p. 1. *The funeral sermon of Nell Gwyn.*

Our author sought vainly for a copy of this doubtlessly edifying discourse through the medium of *Notes and Queries* (1st series, i. 28).

p. 2. *The Coal Yard in Drury Lane.*

Now known as Goldsmith Street.

p. 2. *In Pipe Lane . . . Hereford . . . a small house . . . in which . . . she was born.*

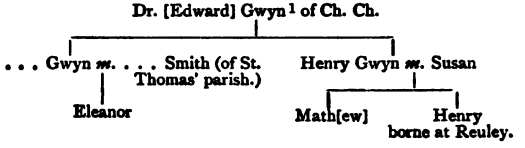
More correctly Pipe Well Lane. The house itself was pulled down in 1859, but the Herefordians, in their anxiety to claim Nelly as their own, changed the name of the place from Pipe Well Lane to Gwyn Street. Moreover, in 1883, good Dr. Atlay, the then Bishop of Hereford, allowed a memorial tablet to Nelly to be fixed on the outer face of his garden wall, in order that no future uncertainty might exist as to the site of the house where (on the slenderest authority) Charles II.'s mistress is supposed to have been born. We have not heard that the birthplace of Barbara, Duchess of Cleveland, has been similarly distinguished. Surely her service to the country in relieving the illustrious Marlborough of pecuniary anxiety should not be overlooked.

p. 2. *The place of Nell Gwyn's birth.*

Wood, in noticing the death of old Mrs. Gwyn, expressly states that she "lived sometimes in Oxford"

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(*Life and Times*, Oxf. Hist. Soc., ii. 457). Elsewhere (*ibid.*, ii. 565) he gives a pedigree of the family, as follows:—



Nothing probably can be gleaned from the registers of St. Thomas's parish, as they do not begin until 1655.

Among the many "traditions" connected with Nell Gwyn is one to the effect that her real name was Margaret Symcott; it is mentioned in Doran's *Their Majesties' Servants*, ed. Lowe, i. 91 (cf. also Manning and Bray's *History of Surrey*, iii. App. xvi, xxii, xxxi).

p. 5. *The satires of the time have pilloried a cousin.*

Thus Rochester in *A Panegyrick on Nelly*:—

"Nor must her cousin be forgot; preferred
From many years' command in the black guard
To be an ensign——
Whose tattered colours well do represent
His first estate i' th' ragged regiment."

p. 5. *Her mother.*

Wood, under date July 20, 1679, writes:—"Elen Gwynn, commonly called old Madam Gwynne, being drunk with brandy, fell in a ditch neare the Neathouses, London, and was stifled. Mother to Nell Quin. Lived sometimes in Oxford." (*Life and Times*, Oxf. Hist. Soc., ii. 457.)

Lord Rochester, in his amusing lampoon, entitled *A Panegyrick on Nelly*, wrote:—

[1] Edward Gwin, M.A., installed canon of the fourth stall in Ch. Ch., May 11, 1615; died Aug. 24, 1624.

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"Nor was the mother's funeral less her care,
No cost, no velvet, did the daughter spare:
Fine gilded 'Scutcheons did the Herse inrich,
To celebrate this Martyr of the Ditch;
Burnt brandy did in flaming Brimmers flow,
Drank at her funeral, while her well-pleas'd shade
Rejoyc'd, even in the sober Fields below,
At all the drunkenness her Death had made."

Sir George Etherege, in his *The Lady of Pleasure, a Satyr*, which has for its argument

"The life of Nelly truly shown
From Cole-yard and Celler, to the Throne,
Till into the Grave she tumbled down,"

and begins,

"I sing the story of a scoundrel Lass,
Rais'd from a dung-hill to a King's embrace,"

refers to

"The Pious Mother of this flaming Whore,
Maid, Punk, and Bawd, full Sixty years and more,
Dy'd drunk with Brandy in a Common-shore."

In some anonymous couplets called *Satyr Unmuzzled*, Nelly and her mother are severely handled (see *Roxburghe Ballads*, ed. J. W. Ebsworth, pt. xiii. p. 33).

p. 5. *The two Marshalls.*

This story is "mighty pretty" as it stands (even in the Braybrookian version of Pepys), but later research has robbed it of much of its point. The sisters Anne (Nan) and Rebecca (Beck) Marshall were certainly not the daughters of the Presbyterian minister referred to, as Colonel Chester has conclusively shown in *Westminster Abbey Registers*, 1876, p. 149. Stephen Marshall, the eminent preacher, died Nov. 19, 1655, and at the date of his will his wife was dead, and five of his

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daughters were already married—three of them at least to clergymen—and had several children; his remaining daughter, who proved the will, was unmarried, but she bore the name of Susan, and as her father's executor must have been of full age.

Sir Peter Leycester, who married a daughter of Gilbert, Lord Gerard, of Gerards Bromley, Staffordshire, observes in his *Historical Antiquities concerning Cheshire*, that "the two famous women-actors in London" were daughters of —— Marshall, chaplain to Lord Gerard, by Elizabeth, bastard daughter of John Dutton of Dutton. Sir Peter, being connected by marriage with the Duttons, ought to have known the fact, but Dr. George W. Marshall (Rouge Croix), who has done so much to illustrate the history of the Marshall families, notably in his privately printed *Miscellanea Marescelliana*, has not succeeded in verifying Sir Peter's statement.

The excerpt from Pepys may as well be given in the honest diarist's own words:—

"Oct. 26, 1667. Mrs. Pierce tells me that the two Marshalls at the King's house are Stephen Marshall's, the great Presbyterian's daughters: and that Nelly and Beck Marshall, falling out the other day, the latter called the other my Lord Buckhurst's whore. Nell answered then, 'I was but one man's whore, though I was brought up in a bawdy-house to fill strong waters to the guests; and you are a whore to three or four, though a Presbyter's praying daughter!' which was very pretty."

p. 5. *Lewknor Lane.*

Lewknor's Lane, on the east side of Drury Lane, opposite Short's Gardens, was so called after Sir Lewis Lewknor, master of the ceremonies during the reign of James I., who lived in Drury Lane. It was once the residence of Jonathan Wild, and was the scene of Jack Sheppard's capture after his second escape from Newgate in 1724. It is now known as Charles Street.

p. 6. *She was ten years of age . . . in* 1660.

Or rather *nine* years, as she was born on Feb. 2, 1650–1.

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NOTES

p. 7. *Here's a health unto his Majesty.*

This one-time favourite toast is referred to by Shadwell (*Works*, ii. 268; iii. 52). The words as given in *Catch that catch can; or, The Musical Companion, containing Catches and Rounds for three and four voices*, 4to, 1667, are as follows:—

"Here's a health unto his Majesty, with a fa, la, la,
Conversion [? Confusion] to his enemies, with a fa, la, la.
And he that will not pledge his health,
I wish him neither wit nor wealth,
Nor yet a rope to hang himself.

"With a fa, la, la la,
With a fa, la," etc.

Jeremy Savile seems to have composed the music.

p. 9. *New theatres in London.*

For fuller details of the theatres of this period Mr. R. W. Lowe's monograph on *Thomas Betterton* (1891), especially the chapter on "A Restoration Theatre," may be consulted with advantage. There are contemporary views of both the exterior and stage of the Dorset Garden theatre published with Settle's *Empress of Morocco* (ed. 1673).

p. 9. *The King's Theatre.*

Thomas Killigrew started business with his company at a house in Bear Yard, Vere Street, Clare Market, previously Gibbons's Tennis Court, Nov. 8, 1660; it is now (1903) cleared away for the construction of the new thoroughfare from Holborn to the Strand; an engraving of the ruins, as they appeared after a fire in 1809, is in Wilkinson's *Londina Illustrata*. He opened Drury Lane Theatre on May 7, 1663 (not on April 8 as Cunningham, misled by Downes, has stated). The theatre was destroyed by fire in 1672, but was soon rebuilt, and reopened on March 26, 1674.

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A ballad "on the burning of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, Jan. 25, 1671–2," has this couplet:—

"He cryes just judgment and wished when poor Bell
Rung out his last, 't had been the stage's kNell."

A contemporary manuscript note on a copy of the ballad in the British Museum informs us that this was construed into a reflection upon Nell Gwyn, and the printer was threatened with prosecution by Sir Roger L'Estrange for making a capital N, although the verses were licensed (*Notes and Queries*, 2nd ser., ix. 121).

p. 10. *The Duke's Theatre.*

Sir William Davenant chose Salisbury Court, Fleet Street, for the first appearance of his company (Nov. 15, 1660), whence, in June 1661, he migrated to Portugal Row, Lincoln's Inn Fields. A note on "Sir William Davenant and the Revival of the Drama during the Protectorate" from the pen of Dr. C. H. Firth, appeared in the *English Historical Review* for April 1903.

p. 12. *Mrs. Hughes.*

In Mr. R. W. Lowe's *Thomas Betterton*, 1891, p. 81, Margaret Hughes is shown to have been the Desdemona "regarding whom Jordan's prologue was written, and, therefore, the first woman who acted on the English stage after the Restoration." The story of her conquest of Prince Rupert, and the amusement of the Court thereat, is thus told in Hamilton's *Memoirs of Count Grammont*:—

"Prince Rupert found charms in the person of another player, called Hughes, who brought down and greatly subdued his natural fierceness. From this time, adieu alembics, crucibles, furnaces, and all the black furniture of the forges: a complete farewell to all mathematical instruments and chemical speculations: sweet powder and essences were now the only ingredients that occupied any share of his attention. The impertinent gipsy chose to be attacked in form; and proudly refusing money,

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that, in the end, she might sell her favours at a dearer rate, she caused the poor prince to act a part so unnatural, that he no longer appeared like the same person. The King was greatly pleased with this event, for which great rejoicings were made at Tunbridge; but nobody was bold enough to make it the subject of satire, though the same constraint was not observed with other ridiculous personages."

p. 11. *Shank.*

The list of actors printed in the first folio of Shakespeare (1623) contains the name of John Shanke. He died in Jan. 1635–6. The Restoration Shank or Shancke is probably identical with "one Shanks, a player," who acted no very glorious part in the Civil War (see Collier's *Hist. Engl. Dram. Poetry*, ed. 1879, iii. 485).

p. 12. *The two Marshalls.*

Our author's mistake respecting the parentage of the two Marshalls has already been noticed.

p. 12. *Mrs. Knep . . . the mistress of Pepys.*

Mrs. Knep can hardly be styled the diarist's "mistress," although she granted him a share of her favours. The details in the *Diary* respecting this lively actress and "her brute of a husband," whom Pepys describes as a "horse jockey," are so amusing as to make it a matter for regret that no particulars of their subsequent history can be recovered. Mrs. Knipp or Knep probably made her *début* on the stage of the Theatre Royal as a member of Killigrew's company, as Epicene in Ben Jonson's *Silent Woman*, on June 1, 1664. Pepys made her acquaintance at his friend Mrs. Pierce's on Dec. 6, 1665, and thought her "pretty enough, but the most excellent, mad-humoured thing, and sings the noblest that ever I heard in my life." Her husband he describes as "an ill, melancholy, jealous-looking fellow," suspected of ill-treating her. On Jan. 2, 1665–6 he records the "perfect

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pleasure" it gave him at Lord Brouncker's "to hear her sing, and especially her little Scotch song of Barbary Allen." They soon became very intimate, corresponding with one another as "Dapper Dicky" and "Barbary Allen."

Her last recorded appearance was as Mrs. Dorothy in D'Urfey's version of Fletcher's *Trick for Trick* in 1678. (See *Dictionary of National Biography*, *s.v.* Knipp.)

p. 13. *Joseph Harris.*

The researches of Mr. Lowe (*Thomas Betterton*, 1891, p. 72) have proved conclusively that the christian name of this well-known actor, who was Pepys's intimate friend, was Henry and not Joseph. Mr. Lowe supposes that Harris died or retired about 1682.

p. 13. *Elizabeth Davenport.*

There were two actresses named Davenport—the sisters Elizabeth and Frances—and both are indifferently styled "Mrs. Davenport" in the lists of *dramatis personæ*. It is, however, tolerably certain that Elizabeth was the Roxolana mentioned in Pepys's *Diary* and Hamilton's *Memoirs of Count Grammont* as the mistress of the Earl of Oxford; her elder sister, Frances, being, according to Pepys (April 7, 1668), a "very bad actor."

p. 14. *Jubilee Dicky.*

The nickname bestowed on Henry Norris from his performance of that character in Farquhar's *Constant Couple; or, a Trip to the Jubilee.*

p. 16. *The ladies . . . wore . . . masks.*

In Steele's *Town Talk*, No. 5, dated Jan. 13, 1715–6, we are told that the wearing of masks, which had long become the distinguishing badge of courtesans, was prohibited in theatres.

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p. 17. *Pepys, when challenged in the pit*, etc.

Pepys relates his *rencontre* with the orange-wench under date May 11, 1668. A little previously we are told by him (March 26, 1668) that sixpence was the orthodox price of a "chaney" orange at the playhouse; half that sum being the cost elsewhere.

p. 20. *A favourite passage.*

The words of a song ("Beauty retire; thou doest my pitty move"), addressed by Solyman to Roxolana, and taken from the second part of the *Siege of Rhodes*, by Sir William Davenant, Act IV. sc. ii.

p. 20. *Joseph Harris of the Duke's.*

As previously noted, the christian name of this celebrated actor was Henry (not Joseph).

p. 21. *Nell was in her sixteenth . . . year.*

As she was born in Feb. 1650-1, she had just entered her fifteenth year.

p. 22. *Old Stephen Marshall's younger daughter.*

It has been already pointed out that Stephen Marshall was not the father of the actresses Anne and Rebecca Marshall.

p. 22. *The heiress of the very earl.*

Lady Diana de Vere, eldest daughter and eventually sole heiress of Aubrey, twentieth and last Earl of Oxford of the name, was married, April 13, 1694, to Nell Gwyn's eldest son, Charles Beauclerk, Duke of St. Albans.

The well-known lines on the Duchess of St. Albans, by Lord Halifax, may here be cited:—

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"The line of Vere, so long renowned in arms,
Concludes with lustre in St. Albans' charms;
Her conquering eyes have made their race compleat;
They rose in valour, and in beauty set."

The verses were written in 1703 "for the toasting glasses of the Kit-Kat Club." The two last lines recall those of Waller ("On St. James's Park")—

"Making the circle of their reign complete
Those suns of empire, where they rise they set."

p. 23. *The Dongan described by De Grammont.*

The city merchant, who is said by Etherege in his *The Lady of Pleasure* to have been Nelly's first "protector" and introducer to the stage, is quite a different person from the Duncan of *Madam Nelly's Complaint*, by the same satirist.

The Duncan, who is supposed to have owed his appointment in the Guards to Nelly's fondness for him, was certainly not identical with the Dongan, or rather Dungan, mentioned in Hamilton's *Memoirs of Count Grammont.* It is true that his christian name was Robert, but he died in or about July 1662 (*Administration Act Book*, P. C. C., 1662, f. 61, now lost), when Nelly was a child of eleven. He did not succeed, but was succeeded by Louis de Duras, Marquis of Blanquefort, afterwards Earl of Feversham, in the lieutenancy of the Duke of York's troop of Guards. Another vacancy in the same troop occurred in June 1667, when de Duras was appointed captain and colonel, and Robert Werden, or Worden, lieutenant and major respectively (*Cal. State Papers*, Dom. 1667, p. 245).

Lieut. Robert Dongan came of a family conspicuous for thir attachment to the house of Stewart. He himself was imprisoned for being concerned in the plot to assassinate Cromwell in Nov. 1655, but by Feb. 1656 had escaped to Flanders (*Cal. Clarendon State Papers*, vol. iii.).

His elder brother, Sir William Dongan, born about

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1630, distinguished himself in the military service, and was created, Feb. 14, 1661-2, Viscount Dungan of Clane, co. Kildare, being subsequently, Jan. 2, 1685-6, created Earl of Limerick. He was colonel of a regiment of Dragoons in the service of James II. in Ireland in 1688. After the defeat at the Boyne (July 1, 1690), he retired to France and was attainded in 1691. His estates of nearly 30,000 acres were forfeited to William III., who granted them to his Dutch favourite, the Earl of Athlone, in 1693. He died in France, Dec. 1698.

Another brother, Thomas Dongan, who is mentioned in the text, was born in 1634, and was for some time colonel of an Irish regiment in the service of Louis XIV. of France, but was subsequently (for Charles II. of England) lieutenant-governor of Tangier and governor of New York. He appears, notwithstanding the attainder of 1691, to have assumed in 1698 and been generally allowed the peerage. He died Dec. 14, 1715, aged eighty-one (*Complete Peerage*, ed. G. E. C[okayne], v. 81).

p. 24. *The earliest notice . . . of her appearance on the stage.*

Nell Gwyn's first recorded performance at the Theatre Royal took place in 1665 as Cydaria, Montezuma's daughter, in Dryden's *Indian Emperor*, a character which Pepys twice saw her in two years later (Aug. 22 and Nov. 11, 1667), when he disapproved of her being given so serious a part.

p. 29. *The 2nd of March*, 1666-7.

Not *February* as in original text.

p. 32. *One of the most infamous of alleys.*

The allusion is to Pall Mall Place, leading from King Street to Pall Mall; it is now highly respectable.

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p. 32. *Nelly's lodgings.*

The old house in Drury Lane where Nell Gwyn is believed to have lodged had been known since the days of Henry VII. as the Cock and Pye tavern. It was pulled down in 1891, rebuilt, and has now (1903) disappeared under the Strand Improvement scheme of the London County Council. It was situated on the west side of the lane, nearly opposite Wych Street. An engraving of it was done by S. Rawle in 1807 for the *European Magazine* (vol. lii.). There is also a water-colour of it by J. Findlay, dated 1850, in the Crace Collection, British Museum (portfolio xvii., Nos. 157, 158).

p. 42. *The very expressive English word touting.*

The derivation of the word "touting" here offered is presumably a jest.

p. 49. "*Little Miss Davis.*"

She commenced to act in 1661 (not as Downes states in 1662). Her picture by Lely in the National Portrait Gallery makes her features singularly unattractive. In another Lely she is depicted as playing on a guitar. The portrait by Kneller, alluded to by Granger as formerly belonging to Baptist May, the keeper of the Privy Purse, represents her with a negro servant (*Biog. Hist.*, ed. 1775, iv. 186).

p. 52. *A house in Suffolk Street, Haymarket.*

Here Moll Davis lived from 1667 to 1676; she then migrated to a house in the south-west corner of St. James's Square, and stayed there until 1687 (Dasent's *Hist. of St. James's Square*, pp. 26, 184).

p. 52. *When Miss Davis*, etc.

Pepys (May 31, 1668) writes:—"At the play at Court the other night, Mrs. Davis was there; and when she

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was to come to dance her jigg, the Queene would not stay to see it, which people do think it was out of displeasure at her being the King's whore, that she could not bear it."

p. 52. *The imperious Countess of Castlemaine.*

An anecdote of the silly vanity of this woman is told by Humphrey Prideaux in a letter to John Ellis, dated Sept. 17, 1674. She had come to Oxford to place her eldest son Charles Fitz-Roy—(a "very kockish idle boy" she called him, but he was in fact almost imbecile through her cruelty to him when a mere child)—at Christ Church. "The morneing before she went," writes Prideaux, "she sate at least an hour in her coach, that every body might se her" (*Letters*, Camd. Soc., p. 21). Prideaux's correspondent, "handsome Jack Ellis," at one time shared her expansive affections with a host of others, but having bragged of the intimacy, he was waylaid in the night by her satellites and reduced to the condition of Atys.

p. 56. *Nelly's part was Alixia.*

This statement may be doubted. Downes in his *Roscius Anglicanus* says that "Mrs. Gwin" acted the heroine, Alizia, and by "Mrs. Gwin" he always designates an actress at the Theatre Royal named Anne Quin, Quyn, or Gwyn, who, needless to say, is constantly confounded with Neli Gwyn.

p. 57. *Other rumours relating to Lord Buckhurst.*

The charge so frequently made against Lord Buckhurst of handing over Nell Gwyn to the King in return for certain considerations, rests apparently on no better evidence than a statement said to have been made by Dryden to the inaccurate Boyer. Pepys's chronology of the episode is as usual clear and precise. On July 13, 1667, he writes:—"My Lord Buckhurst hath got Nell away from the King's house and gives her £100 a year, so as

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she hath sent her parts to the house and will act no more." Lord and actress went to keep merry house together at Epsom, but soon parted, seemingly on no good terms, for in August Nell was back at the King's house acting Cydaria in Dryden's *Indian Emperor* again, and then Orange Moll told Pepys (Aug. 29) "that Nell is already left by my Lord Buckhurst, and that he makes sport of her, and swears that she hath had all she could get of him." The same accurate diarist even chronicles the commencement of Charles's connection with the sprightly actress, for on Jan. 11, 1667-8, he writes:—"The King did send several times for Nelly, and she was with him."

In describing the sojourn of the Court at Tunbridge Wells in the summer of 1668, Hamilton says:—"The queen had sent for the players, either that there might be no intermission in the diversions of the place, or, perhaps, to retort upon Miss Stewart by the presence of Nell Gwyn, part of the uneasiness she felt from hers" (*Memoirs of Count Grammont*). Upon this episode in the actress's life Edward Jerningham founded a silly comedy in three acts, entitled *The Peckham Frolic, or Nell Gwyn* (published anonymously in 1799). The scene is laid in Peckham, near Tunbridge Wells, where some of the Court party resided.

p. 59. *Nelly . . . "in a broad-brimmed hat."*

Nell's cartwheel hat, although at first intended as a caricature of the French fashions brought over by the Duchess of Orleans and her suite, seems to have "caught on," and (in a modified form) to have become the mode among the bolder beauties of that day. The Countess of Kildare is wearing one in her portrait by Wissing, so finely mezzotinted by R. Williams.

p. 61. *The part of Almahide was her last performance on the stage.*

Nell Gwyn is known to have appeared as Panthea in the revival of Beaumont and Fletcher's *A King and No*

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King, in 1670, but in the following year she seems to have definitely quitted the stage. Genest, however, in his *Some Account of the English Stage*, supposes that she returned to the boards in 1677, in which year he credits her with acting at Dorset Garden Angelica Bianca in Mrs. Behn's *Rover*, Astrea in the *Constant Nymph* (an anonymous pastoral), and Thalestris in the *Siege of Babylon* of Samuel Pordage.

In 1678 he assigns to her the characters of Lady Squeamish in Otway's *Friendship in Fashion*, and Lady Knowell in Mrs. Behn's *Sir Patient Fancy;* and in 1682 he makes her return to the Theatre Royal to play Sunamire in the *Loyal Brother of Southerne*, and Queen Elizabeth in Banks's *Unhappy Favourite, or the Earl o Essex*. Probably these parts were created by Mrs. Anne Gwin, the actress so constantly confounded with Nell Gwyn. Besides, Nelly's position as a lady of the Privy Chamber to Charles II.'s luckless consort (to which she was appointed in 1675) would be incompatible with further stage performances.

p. 63. *His personal appearance was remarkable.*

When, after the battle of Worcester, a reward of £1000 was offered for the capture of Charles Stewart, he was described as "a tall man, above two yards high, his hair a deep brown near to black" (*Calendar of State Papers*, Dom. 1651, p. 47).

p. 63. *Riley must have done him an injustice.*

Ryley's portrait (as engraved by Trouvain) is not especially ugly when compared with those by Kneller and Caspars which are absolutely forbidding.

p. 66. *He was seen in St. James's Park.*

A contemporary pencil drawing by Wittock from a picture by T. Van Wyck at Devonshire House gives a

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view in St. James's Park, showing Spring Gardens and Charles and his Court walking (Crace Collection, Brit. Mus., portfolio xii., no. 28). In the same portfolio (nos. 33 and 34) is an engraving by S. Mazell of the Old Horse Guards, etc., with Charles II. and his Court going towards the Decoy.

p. 72. *Twenty-four violins playing before him.*

See Roger North's *Memoirs of Musick*, ed. Rimbault, 1846, p. 99 (notes), for a list of the royal violinists in 1674.

p. 84. *Old Rowley.*

It may be added that a portion of the Newmarket racecourse is still called Rowley Mile, from the same stallion (see *Notes and Queries*, 1st ser., ix. 477).

In the *Richardsoniana* is mentioned another derivation of the King's nickname of Rowley: "There was an old goat that used to roam about the privy-garden to which they had given this name; a rank lecherous devil, that everybody knew and used to stroke, because he was good-humoured and familiar; and so they applied this name to Charles."

The name of the lady who sang the ballad is there correctly given as Howard (not Holford, as Cunningham writes it). She was Dorothy, eldest daughter of William Howard (fourth son of Thomas, first Earl of Berkshire), and a maid of honour to the Duchess of York; her mother, Elizabeth, daughter of Lothiel, Lord Dundas, in the Scottish peerage, was housekeeper to the Duke of York (see Pepys's *Diary*, March 4, 1668–9). She married, Nov. 23, 1675 (her age being then about twenty-three), James Graham, of Levens, co. Westmoreland, second son of Sir George Graham, second baronet of Esk, co. Cumberland, who was afterwards M.P., and keeper of the privy purse to King James II. She was buried in Westminster Abbey Dec. 17, 1701. Evelyn (Sept. 15, 1685) speaks of her as "an excellent house-wife, a prudent and virtuous lady."

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p. 92. *A sermon by South.*

The incident is usually connected with South's often quoted description of Cromwell's first appearance in parliament, "with a threadbare torn coat and a greasy hat (and perhaps neither of them paid for)." But, as is pointed out by the Rev. Alexander Gordon in his excellent article on South in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, this passage occurs in a sermon preached, after Charles's death, at Westminster Abbey on Feb. 22, 1684–5. South was chaplain in ordinary to Charles, but had no other preferment from him than a Westminster prebend. He is said, however, to have been subsequently offered bishoprics.

p. 92. *Laurence Hyde, Lord Rochester.*

The Hon. Laurence Hyde, second son of Edward, first Earl of Clarendon, by his second wife, Frances, daughter of Sir Thomas Aylesbury, bart., was baptized March 15, 1641–2. He was Master of the Robes, 1662–75; First Lord of the Treasury (head of the Government), 1679–84, and again, 1685–7, being created, April 24, 1681, Baron Wotton Bassett, Wilts, and Viscount Hyde of Kenilworth, co. Warwick, and (nineteen months later), Nov. 29, 1682, Earl of Rochester. From Aug. 1684 till Feb. 1684–5 he was Lord President of the Council, being thus, as Lord Halifax wittily expressed it, "kicked upstairs." At the accession of his brother-in-law, James II., to the throne, he was reappointed to the Treasury as above mentioned, but was dismissed therefrom in Dec. 1687. His bearing at a fruitless conference to convert him to the Roman Catholic faith is supposed to have told against him. He received, however, on his dismissal, an annuity of £2000, and another (for two lives) of £4000. In 1689, though he spoke in favour of a Regency, he took the oath to the new Government; acted as Viceroy of Ireland (Lord Lieutenant), 1700–3; and Lord President of the Council (for the second time), 1710–11. He died suddenly at his house near the Cockpit, Whitehall, May

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2, 1711. Lord Romney (Henry Sidney) in his *Diary* calls him "the undisputed leader of the Tory party, to whose highest principles in Church and State he shewed a constant and probably conscientious attachment." He was an effective writer and a good man of business, but was too fond of drink, and used (says Roger North) to "swear like a cutter' when in a passion. According to a ballad (*Lamentable Lory*, 1684):—

"To those that ask boons
He swears by God's 'oons,
And chides them as if
They came there to steal spoons."

He married in 1665 Henrietta, fifth daughter of Richard Boyle, first Earl of Burlington (Earl of Cork), by Elizabeth, in her own right Baroness Clifford. She was one of the beauties of the period. The Earl of Ailesbury in his *Memoirs* says that: "It was commonly said, and I believe with good grounds, that my Lady Henrietta Hyde, afterwards Countess of Rochester, did great prejudice to her Lord, when Minister." Lady Rochester died at Bath, in her forty-second year, April 12, 1687.

Lord Rochester, to whom Nell Gwyn addressed a letter (printed at p. 207), was one of her executors. In the ninth Report of the *Historical MSS. Commission* there is printed the following excerpt from a letter of Ralph Montagu, afterwards Duke of Montagu: "I know for certain there is a great caball to bring in Mr. Hyde, and that Nelly and the Duke of Buckingham are in it." Montagu was, however, a most vicious, unprincipled man, and his statements cannot count for much.

p. 96. *When on his deathbed, the Queen sent him a message.*

The Queen's grief was undoubtedly sincere; not so Charles's when she was supposed to be dying. The Comte de Cominges, the French ambassador in London, wrote to Louis XIV. (Nov. 1, 1663) as follows: "Though she [the queen] has some little respite from time to time,

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I despair of her recovery. . . . The King seems to me deeply affected. Well! he supped none the less yesterday with Madame de Castlemaine, and had his usual talk with Mlle. Stewart, of whom he is excessively fond. There is already a talk of his marrying again, and everybody gives him a new wife according to his own inclination; and there are some who do not look beyond England to find one for him." But Catherine of Braganza took care to set all these plans to naught; cured of her physicians, thanks to her husband's kindness, she recovered; there were great rejoicings, none being more sincere, the ambassador wickedly observes, than the Duke of York's and his wife's (M. J. J. Jusserand's *A French Ambassador at the Court of Charles the Second*, p. 88).

p. 100. *Sir Fleetwood Sheppard.*

After Nell had borne the King a first son, Sheppard was appointed her steward, and seems to have managed all her financial business. Under date Oct. 16, 1678, Wood writes: "The King returned from Newmarket to London. Some dayes before which Nell Quin with Fleetw[ood] Shepard were entertained by certaine scholars at Cambridge (either by the vice-chancellor or proctors) and had verses presented to her" (*Life and Times*, Oxf. Hist. Soc., ii. 420). Sheppard was the first to recognise the promise of Matthew Prior. To him Prior addressed in 1689 two of his genial verse "Epistles." He died in 1698, aged sixty-four.

Nelly's secretary was James Booth, one of the witnesses to her will (see Mr. F. G. Hilton Price's interesting communication to *Notes and Queries*, 9th ser., vi. 350).

p. 100. *Louise Renée de Penencourt de Quérouaille.*

Louise Renée de Kéroualle was the elder of the two daughters of Guillaume de Penancoët, sieur de Kéroualle, a Breton gentleman of very ancient lineage, whose wife was through her mother connected with the De Rieux. The time of her birth is uncertainly referred to the year 1649.

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Our author is mistaken in saying that Louise was left in England by the Duchess of Orleans. She returned to France with her. After the duchess's tragic end a coldness on the part of Charles II. towards Louis XIV. resulted. Louise was thereupon sent back to England, Charles ordering a royal yacht to meet her at Calais. On arriving in London she was named maid of honour to the patiently enduring Queen Catherine.

During a sojourn of the King at Newmarket Louise was, in Oct. 1671, invited to Lady Arlington's country seat of Euston, where, with the co-operation of the French ambassador and others, she was established as mistress *en titre*. Evelyn, who was a guest of the Arlingtons, has described the ceremonies; for minuter details thereof see Forneron's *Louise de Kéroualle*, English translation, pp. 70–74. On Aug. 19, 1673, she was created Baroness Petersfield, Countess of Fareham, and Duchess of Portsmouth, all in co. Southampton, and by the King of France she was made Duchess of Aubigny in Aubigny in Jan. 1684.

To the aversion inspired by the Duchess of Portsmouth much of Nell Gwyn's popularity is attributable. Her rapacity was fearful. In 1681 the sums paid to her amounted to the enormous total of £136,668. Her splendid apartment at the end of the gallery at Whitehall was, according to Evelyn, "twice or thrice pull'd down and rebuilt to satisfy her prodigal and expensive pleasures"; it was ultimately destroyed by fire, with all its costly contents, April 9, 1691. In contrast to the virago Duchess of Cleveland she was said at times of difficulty to rely chiefly on the influence of tears.

At the end of July 1688 she suddenly took her departure to France. The remainder of her life, chiefly spent on her estate at Aubigny, was a struggle against pecuniary difficulties. Saint-Simon in 1718 speaks of her as old, embarrassed in her affairs, and "very converted and penitent" (*Mémoires*, edit. 1863, x. 48; *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, art. "Kéroualle"). She died at Paris Nov. 14, 1734.

Evelyn writes under date Sept. 10, 1675: "I was

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casually showed the Duchess of Portsmouth's splendid apartment at Whitehall, luxuriously furnished, and with ten times the richness and glory beyond the Queen's; such massy pieces of plate, whole tables, and stands of incredible value."

Again, on Oct. 4, 1683, he writes: "Following his Majesty this morning through the gallery, I went, with the few who attended him, into the Duchess of Portsmouth's dressing-room within her bed-chamber, where she was in her morning loose garment, her maids combing her, newly out of bed, his Majesty and the gallants standing about her; but that which engaged my curiosity, was the rich and splendid furniture of this woman's apartment, . . . whilst her Majesty's does not exceed some gentlemen's ladies in furniture and accommodation. Here I saw the new fabric of French tapestry, for design, tenderness of work, and incomparable imitation of the best paintings, beyond anything I had ever beheld. Some pieces had Versailles, St. Germains, and other palaces of the French King, with huntings, figures, and landscapes, exotic fowls, and all to the life rarely done. Then for Japan cabinets, skreens, pendule clocks, great vases of wrought plate, tables, stands, chimney-furniture, sconces, branches, braseras, etc., all of massy silver, and out of number, besides some of her Majesty's best paintings."

p. 101. *Her only child by the King.*

Charles Lennox, born July 29, 1672; created Aug. 9, 1675, Baron of Settrington, Earl of March, and Duke of Richmond, in Yorkshire, in the English peerage, and Nov. 9 following, Baron Methuen, Earl of Darnley, and Duke of Lennox, in the peerage of Scotland. He married, Jan. 1692–3, Anne, second daughter of Francis, Lord Brudenell, and widow of Henry, second Lord Belasyse, of Worlaby. He died at Goodwood, May 27, 1723.

Evelyn speaks of him in 1684 as "a very pretty boy," while Macky (*Characters*) in 1704, though he calls him

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"well shaped," adds "black complexion; much like King Charles." He adds also that he is "good-natured to a fault; very well bred, and has many valuable things in him; is an enemy to business; very credulous," to which Dean Swift adds "a shallow Coxcomb." He apparently "had the easy pleasant manners of his father, but was an unprincipled adventurer through life, and was in his old age addicted to drunkenness and other vices" (*Dict. Nat. Biog.*).

p. 102. *Her neighbour on one side.*

Another near neighbour of Nelly's in Pall Mall in 1671 was Mary Knight, a celebrated singer and mistress of Charles II. Evelyn refers to her singing as incomparable, and adds that she had "the greatest reach of any English woman; she had been lately roaming in Italy, and was much improv'd in that quality" (*Diary*, Dec. 2, 1674).

From the satires of the time we learn that she and Nelly had once been friends; she is also represented as being rather a procuress for Charles II. than his mistress. In Etherege's *The Lady of Pleasure*, the King, on hearing of Nelly's charms, is made to say:—

"Goe Mrs. Knight, quoth he, and fetch her strait."

The same writer devotes another satire to a recital of the jealousies of the rival mistresses. A few lines may be cited:

"Pitty poor Nell that's haunted by Moll Knight.
* * * * *
Knight, cruel Knight, that once lay in my Breast,
My constant Crony and eternal Guest,
Th' Applauder of my Beauty and my Jest;
She, She, that cruel She to France is fled,
Yet lets me not enjoy my quiet Bed.
* * * * *
Even now in Terror on my Bed I lie,
Send Dr. B[urne]t to me, or I die."

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p. 102. *Nelly at first had only a lease of the house.*

The story (probably a mere invention) is told by W. F. Ewin in a letter to the Rev. James Granger as follows :—

"My friend Dr. Heberden has built a fine house in Pall Mall, on the Palace side; he told me it was the only freehold house on that side; that it was given by a long lease by Charles II. to Nell Gwyn, and upon her discovering it to be *only a lease* under the Crown, she returned him the lease and conveyances, saying she had always *conveyed free* under the Crown, and always would; and would not accept it till it was *conveyed free* to her by an Act of Parliament made on and for that purpose. Upon Nell's death it was sold, and has been conveyed free ever since. I think Dr. Heberden purchased it of the Waldegrave family" (Granger's *Letters*, p. 308).

In Mr. Dasent's admirable *History of St. James's Square* (1895) is the following clear account of Nelly's residences in Pall Mall:—"Nell Gwyn did not actually live in St. James's Square, as Pennant states. In 1670 she did undoubtedly occupy a house on the north side of Pall Mall, at the corner leading into the Square, removing in the following year to a better house on the south side of the same street, and one door westward of Lady Portland's. (It is said that this house, now an Insurance Office, was occupied at one time by Mrs. Fitz-Herbert, thus forming a characteristic link between the reigns of Charles II. and George IV.) . . . The house in the Square wrongly attributed to her, and depicted in the Crace Collection of London Views in the British Museum, was the one actually inhabited by Moll Davis. Both houses are now merged in the site of the Army and Navy Club" (pp. 183–4).

p. 103. *The imperious Countess of Castlemaine.*

How the virago Countess became a duchess ("by reason of her own personal virtues") is narrated with delightful humour in Hamilton's *Memoirs of Count Grammont.*

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p. 104. *Mrs. Corey . . . Lady Harvey.*

Pepys writes under date Jan. 15, 1668–9:—"Sir W. Coventry told me of the great factions at Court at this day, even to the sober engaging of great persons, and differences, and making the King cheap and ridiculous. It is about my Lady Harvy's being offended at Doll Common's acting of Sempronia, to imitate her; for which she got my Lord Chamberlain, her kinsman, to imprison Doll: when my Lady Castlemayne made the King to release her, and to order her to act it again, worse than ever, the other day, where the King himself was: and since it was acted again, and my Lady Harvy provided people to hiss her and fling oranges at her: but it seems the heat is come to a great height, and real troubles at Court about it."

Lady Harvey, the daughter of Edward, second Lord Montagu of Boughton, was celebrated as a wit and was famous for the bold gay character of her mind. Mrs. Corey was known as Doll Common from acting that part in Ben Jonson's *The Alchymist* (see Pepys's *Diary*, Jan. 15, 1668-9).

p. 105. *A familiar discourse between the King and Mrs. Nelly.*

Another anecdote of Nell's easy manner with the Head of the State, at which a personage perhaps less known to fame than John Evelyn, Mr. Alderman Wright of Oxford, was greatly shocked, is thus narrated in a letter from Humphrey Prideaux to John Ellis, dated 29 Sept. 1681: "Whenever he [Alderman Wright] comes, he speakes scurrulously of the King. It seems, when ye alderman was at Newmarket with his petition [concerning the election of the town clerk at Oxford], the King walkeing in ye feilds met Nel Gwyn, and Nel cald to him, 'Charles, I hope I shall have your company at night, shall I not?' With this story the Alderman makes a great deal of worke wherever he comes. He says he had often heard bad things of the King, but now his own eys have seen it" (*Letters*, Camd. Soc., p. 101).

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p. 105. *The garden was attached to her house in Pall Mall.*

The garden in which Charles stood must have been that attached to St. James's Palace, as the gardens of the Pall Mall houses did not extend to the Park. The King was in his own garden, and not, as is usually supposed, in the mall of the public park.

p. 105. *Berkshire House.*

Berkshire House (built about 1630) stood on the west side of the roadway leading from St. James's Palace to Piccadilly, and was bought by Charles II. in 1668 for Lady Castlemaine. Upon her becoming Duchess of Cleveland, in 1670, she disposed of the mansion, and sold the large garden for building plots, reserving only the south-west corner of the estate, on which, near the present Bridgewater House, was erected Cleveland House. Owing to her reckless extravagance she soon found herself unable to keep up Cleveland House. The connection of the duchess with St. James's survives in Cleveland Court, Cleveland Square, and Cleveland Row (*Dict. Nat. Biog.*, *s. v.* Villiers, Barbara). Her eldest son Charles, first Duke of Cleveland, settled in 1722 at Cleveland House at the south-east corner of King Street and St. James's Square. It was demolished in 1894 (Dasent's *Hist. of St. James's Square*, pp. 3, 97, 101 *sq.*).

p. 106. *Moll Davis had fallen out of favour.*

In a scandalous work called *Lives of the Most Celebrated Beauties* (1715), it is stated that "Nell Gwyn, hearing she was to visit the King, asked her to supper and mixed jalap with her sweetmeats, and that the King in consequence dismissed her with a pension of £1000 a year."

p. 106. *Mrs. Carwell.*

Charles II. in his "Mock Speech," written by Marvell,

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calls her "Carwell," by which name she popularly went (*see* Roger Coke's *A Detection of Court and State*, vol. ii. p. 171).

p. 106. *There is no reason to suspect that Louise was ever unfaithful to the light-hearted King.*

A statement difficult of belief. During the administration of Lord Danby the Duchess was especially anxious to keep on good terms with him (Reresby's *Memoirs*, ed. Cartwright, p. 165), and she is believed at one time to have granted him a share of her favours. The King's jealousy of her intrigue with the handsome Philip de Vendôme was apparently not without cause. Charles proved unable to drive him out of the country, till Louis XIV., anxious for the maintenance of the Duchess's ascendancy, had brought about his return to France.

p. 107. *Her brother-in-law, the Earl of Pembroke.*

This was Philip (Herbert), son of the fifth earl. He was baptized Jan. 5, 1652-3, made K.B. April 19, 1661, and succeeded to the peerage as seventh Earl of Pembroke, July 8, 1674. He married, May 20, 1675, Henriette Mauricette de Kéroualle, younger sister of the Duchess of Portsmouth. He died, Aug. 29, 1683, aged thirty. He is called "Beauish Pembroke" in Lord Rochester's *Coxcombs in Place*. The earl "espoused not learning," but "was addicted to field sports and hospitality," says Aubrey; he is, however, chiefly known for "deeds of drunkenness and manslaughter." He was tried March 1, 1678, by his peers for the murder of Nathanael Cony in a drunken brawl in a Haymarket tavern; but in the result was able to claim the benefit of the statute and was discharged (see *State Trials*, 8vo edit., vi. 1309). On Aug. 18, 1680, he killed an officer of the watch while returning from a drinking bout at Turnham Green. On June 21, 1681, he came into Court, pleaded the King's pardon, and was discharged.

His widow took for her second husband (contract,

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May 11, 1685) Thimoleon Gouffier, Marquis de Thois, governor of Blois, and died in Paris, Nov. 1-12, 1728, aged about seventy-nine.

p. 108. *A most expensive service of plate.*

The fondness of Nell Gwyn for silver plate is well known. The following notice appeared in the *London Gazette*, Jan. 3, 1677-8 :—

"All goldsmiths and others to whom our silver plate may be sold, marked with the cipher E. G., flourished, weighing about 18 ounces, are desired to apprehend the bearer thereof, till they give notice to Mr. Robert Johnson in Heathcock Alley, Strand, over against Durham Yard, or to Mrs. Gwin's porter in the Pell Mell, by whom they shall be rewarded" (*Notes and Queries*, 8th ser., xi. 65).

p. 108. *She and the Duchess.*

In a letter to her brother, Lord Roos, at Belvoir Castle, dated Dec. 11, 1677, Grace, Lady Chaworth says :—

"The younger Killeegree [Henry Killigrew] is banished the Court againe for goeing att 4 of the clocke the other morning to Nell Gwin and knocking her up, being drunke, and saying he came from the King to acquaint her with the good niewse of the D[uchess] of Portsmouth's recovery, and after that raileed her with his abusive tonge extreamly ; and the D[uchess] is perfectly well again, and they say will lead a new lyfe, att least has promised it to her ghostly father" (*Duke of Rutland's MSS.*, ii. 43).

p. 109. *The Duchess was on her way to France.*

Louise was advised to try the waters of Bourbon for her health, which had suffered through the miscellaneous nature of the King's amours. There is a coarse allusion to this effect in some lines on "England's Court Strumpets" among the *Poems on State Affairs*. With her

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sister, Lady Pembroke, she spent part of May and June 1682 at Bourbon. She again crossed to France in August 1685; but soon returned to England, and remained at Whitehall till the end of July 1688, when she made a final departure to France. In the broadside mentioned in the text Nell Gwyn is made to taunt the duchess with her partiality for the Grand Prior of Vendôme.

In *Roxburghe Ballads* (pt. x. p. 286) the editor, the Rev. J. W. Ebsworth, quotes the following lines from a MS. copy of *The Duchess of Portsmouth's Garland* in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh:—

'When Portsmouth did from England fly to follow her Vandome,
Thus all along the gallery, the Monarch made his moan:
'O Chantillion, for charity, send me my Cleaveland home!
Go nymph, so foolish and unkind, your wandering knight pursue,
And leave a love-sick King behind, so faithful and so true;
You gods, when you made Love so blind, you shou'd have lam'd him too.'"

The rivalry between the two mistresses is further recorded in "A Pleasant Dialogue between Two Wanton Ladies of Pleasure, or the Dutchess of Portsmouth's Woful Farewell to her Former Felicity," and "Portsmouth's Lamentation, or a Dialogue between Two Amorous Ladies, E. G. and D. P.," in the Bagford Collection of Ballads.

Another ballad, in the Luttrell Collection, is called "The Duchess of Portsmouth's Farewell," and here

"The Duchess holds a Dialogue,
And talks with Madame Gwin,
Yea, doth relate the wretched state
That now she liveth in."

In answer to her complaints Nelly is made to say:

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"But, madam, from hence you sent treasure away,
With a fa la, etc.
And I suppose for a while you must stay;
With a fa la, etc.
But what I myself have got by my game,
I freely in England expended the same.
But you have transported yours to your shame,
With a fa la, fa la la."

There may have been some truth in this, as Mr. Lavers-Smith points out, for Narcissus Luttrell notices a report, current at the time of her intended flight from England on the death of Charles II., that she was detained on suspicion of crown jewels being in her possession.

Writing on Feb. 9, 1684-5, Luttrell says: "The dutchesse of Portsmouth, since his late majesties death, hath sent her goods and is retired to the French ambassadors; but 'tis said a stop is putt to her goeing beyond sea by his majestie till she hath paid her debts, which are very great: 'tis said she hath also many of the crown jewells, which some are apt to think she must refund before she goe beyond sea." (*Brief Historical Relation*, vol. i. p. 328.)

p. 110. *A still livelier description.*

Madame de Sévigné's letter is dated Sept. 11, 1675. A much better version than that in the text is given in the English translation of Forneron's *Louise de Kéroualle* (p. 115), and is here appended:—

"Kéroualle saw well her way, and has made everything she wished for come to pass. She wanted to be the mistress of the King of England; and behold, he now shares her couch before the eyes of the whole Court. She wanted to be rich; and she is heaping up treasures, and making herself feared and courted. But she did not foresee that a low actress was to cross her path, and to bewitch the King. She is powerless to detach him from this comedian. He divides his money, his time, and his health between the pair. The low actress is as proud as the Duchess of Portsmouth, whom she jeers at,

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mimics, and makes game of. She braves her to her face, and often takes the King away from her, and boasts that she is the best loved of the two. She is young, of madcap gaiety, bold, brazen, debauched, and ready witted. She sings, dances, and frankly makes love her business. Since Kéroualle has become a favourite, Gwynn insists upon the King owning her son as his. This is how she argues: 'That hoity-toity French duchess sets up to be of grand quality. Every one of rank in France is her cousin. The moment some grand lord or lady over there dies, she orders a suit of deep mourning. Well, if she's of such high station, why is she such a jade? She ought to be ashamed of herself! If I were reared to be a lady, I am sure I should blush for *myself*. But it's my trade to be a doxy, and I was never anything else. The King keeps me; ever since he has done so, I have been true to him. He has had a son by me, and I'm going to make him own the brat, for he is as fond of me as of his French miss.' This creature holds her own in an extraordinary manner, and embarrasses and disconcerts the new-fledged duchess."

In one of his letters to Louis XIV.'s minister, Pomponne, dated in 1676, the French ambassador Courtin relates a diverting scene at which he was present, in the rooms of the Duchess Mazarin. Who should enter but Louise de Kéroualle, to pay a visit of ceremony; and, almost at the same moment, Lady Harvey, who hated her worse than any other woman in England. Her ladyship had with her a certain "Miss Nelly," an actress. The comedian had come with Lady Harvey to thank the Duchess Mazarin for the compliments she sent her on the occasion of her son being recognised by King Charles, and given the title of Earl of Brentford [Burford]. All the thanks and little return speeches passed with gay animation and the utmost civility and good taste; and not a word was dropped to betray the low origin of the actress. But when the Duchess of Portsmouth left, Lady Harvey's fair friend, who was of the bold, laughing sort, turned round to De Courtin and asked why it was that the King of France did not send presents to her, instead of to the

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weeping willow who had just gone out? She vowed that he would have more profit in doing so, because the King of England was her constant nocturnal companion, and liked her far the best. The other ladies had heard of the luxurious fineness of Miss Nelly's under-clothing, and asked if they could judge of it for themselves. Without more ado she let them raise each petticoat, one by one, and before all in the room examine them on her. "I never in my life," said Courtin, "saw such thorough cleanliness, neatness, and sumptuosity. I should speak of other things that we all were shown if M. de Lionne were still Foreign Secretary. But with you I must be grave and proper; and so, Monsieur, I end my letter." (*Louise de Kéroualle, Duchess of Portsmouth*, by H. Forneron, English translation, 1887, p. 177.)

p. 111. *The Prince of* ——.

From a letter of Andrew Marvell's (cited in *Hist. MSS. Comm., 6th Report*, pt. i. p. 473 *b*) we learn that the personage thus honoured was Prince de Rohan. Writing to Sir Henry Thompson of Escrick, Yorkshire, from "Westminster, Dec. 1674," Marvell says: "The Duchess of Portsmouth is in deep mourning for the Chevalier de Rohan, as being, forsooth, of kin to that family."

On another occasion, when, in Jan. 1676, the still beautiful Duchess Mazarin entered the English Court "as Armida entered the camp of Godfrey," Nell Gwyn celebrated the triumph of the duchess by going into the deepest mourning—for, she said, the eclipsed Duchess of Portsmouth and her dead hopes (Jusserand's *A French Ambassador at the Court of Charles the Second*).

p. 113. *Of her manner in diverting the King.*

Etherege in his *The Lady of Pleasure, a Satyr*, says of Nell Gwyn:—

"When he was dumpish, she would still be jocund,
And chuck the royal chin of Charles the Second."

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Nelly could doubtless be very funny, but some of the witticisms ascribed to her are not very sparkling. One of them is as follows. At some time in 1675 Charles was complaining to her of want of money, when Nelly suggested a way by which she believed he could not fail of securing the desired supplies. "She told him his parliament being to sit he should treat them with a French ragoe [the Duchess of Portsmouth], Scots collops [Lord Lauderdale], and a calf's head [Lord Sunderland], at which his Majesty laughed and was well pleased" (*Hist. MSS. Comm.*, app. to 2nd Report, p. 22 *b*). Charles must have been as easily amused as Mr. Peter Magnus's friends.

p. 115. *Thomas, Lord Dacre.*

Thomas (Lennard), Lord Dacre, born about 1653, was gentleman of the King's bedchamber, 1680 to 1685. By extravagance and losses by gambling he had to sell the estate of Hurstmonceaux and others. He married, May 16, 1674 (at her age of twelve, and with a dower of £20,000 from the King), Lady Ann Palmer, alias Fitzroy, first daughter of the notorious Barbara, Duchess of Cleveland, her paternity being claimed both by King Charles II. and by Roger (Palmer), Earl of Castlemaine, who was not at the time of her birth separated from her said mother; and he was created Earl of Sussex on Oct. 5 of the same year. He died at Chevening, Oct. 30, 1715.

His widow, who was born Feb. 29, 1661–2, died May 16, 1722. In his *Memoirs* of the Duchess of Cleveland (1871) Steinman prints two extraordinary letters relating to Ralph Montagu's abduction of Lady Sussex from a convent in Paris. (See also *Hatton Correspondence*, Camd. Soc., vol. i. pp. 167–8.) Ralph Montagu (afterwards Duke of Montagu) was son of the 2nd Lord Montagu of Boughton and brother of that notorious lady Elizabeth, wife of Sir Daniel Harvey. He was successively the lover of mother and daughter (the Duchess of Cleveland and Lady Sussex).

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p. 115. *A second child by the King, called James.*

Known as James, Lord Beauclerk. According to Wood he died at Paris "of a sore leg about Michaelmas in 1680," not being quite nine years of age (*Fasti Oxon.*, ed. Bliss, pt. ii. p. 271). There is a pretty mezzotint by Gascar depicting him as a cupid on clouds.

p. 117. *Other occurrences . . . in which Nelly was interested.*

As Charles forced his unhappy consort to take the Countess of Castlemaine into her service immediately after his marriage, so in 1675 he had the baseness to make her appoint Nell Gwyn a lady of the Privy Chamber. The fact is recorded by Samuel Pegge in his *Curialia* (edit. 1791, i. 58). In the list given by Chamberlayne in his *Notitia Angliæ* Nell Gwyn's name is omitted, it being supplied by a significant "&c." Surely space might somewhere be found—say, on the episcopal garden wall—for a memorial tablet to the much-enduring Queen Catherine. Her patience under the treatment she received at the hands of her despicable husband compels our warmest admiration. Even that engaging reprobate De Grammont has nought but good to tell of her.

p. 121. *Houses . . . in which Nell Gwyn is said to have lived.*

These are Sandford House, Sands End, Fulham; Lauderdale House, Highgate (now part of Waterlow Park); Littleberries, Mill Hill (*Notes and Queries*, 6th ser., iv. 48); King's Wick, Sunninghill, Berks, where an avenue of limes near the church which formerly led to the house goes by the name of Nell Gwyn's Avenue (*ibid.*, 5th ser., vi. 67); a two-storied bow-windowed house nearly opposite Leyton Parsonage, Essex (*ibid.*, 6th ser., xi. 275); and Bagnigge House, adjoining the Wells on the south. In the Assembly Room at Bagnigge Wells there was formerly a bust of a woman in Roman attire, said to represent Nell Gwyn, but the likeness was

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not discernible. A deed of covenant dated 1677 in which Nelly is one of the parties is preserved concerning a house numbered 38 Princes Street, Leicester Square (now 53, Wardour Street), but she probably never lived there (*ibid.* 4th ser., iii. 479).

On the site of the Fulham Town-hall stood a house known as Elton Villa. In the grounds was a venerable mulberry tree which tradition alleged had been planted either by Nell Gwyn or her royal lover. It was destroyed in 1888 when the Town-hall was built, and its branches were converted into walking-sticks.

There is nothing beyond tradition to connect Nell Gwyn with Sandford Manor House. According to one report Charles actually built it for his mistress. Faulkner (*Account of Fulham*, 1813) states that a plaster medallion of Nelly was found upon the estate. Other "relics" turned up at a later date cannot be taken seriously. The name of the "Nell Gwynne Cottages," facing the house and now in the possession of the Gas Light and Coke Company, long served to connect the tradition of Nelly with the place. A public-house near this spot, still recalls the name. "Once," writes Mr. Fèret, "it was no unusual thing for persons to make a sort of pilgrimage to Sands End for the purpose of inspecting the supposed house of Mistress Nell" (*Fulham, Old and New*, vol. iii. pp. 272, 273, 277).

p. 122. *Filberts, near Windsor.*

More correctly, Philberds, in the parish of Bray. At that time the name of the manor was written as pronounced—"Fibbers." It was at one time the property of the notorious William Chiffinch (pander to Charles II.), who died here in Nov. 1691, "leaving £20,000 behind him" (will in P.C.C. 5, Fane; *Life and Times of Anthony Wood*, Oxf. Hist. Soc., iii. 376).

p. 122. *A house . . . "formerly the dairy of Nell Gwyn."*

This house, now (1903) swept away under the Strand improvement scheme of the London County Council,

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stood on the north side of the Strand, in the row in front of Holywell Street; it had been rebuilt, was occupied by the Express Dairy Company, and was numbered 272. According to an inscription on the front the dairy was established in 1666. The rest of the inscription was meant, we can only suppose, to record the important fact that Nell Gwyn had her daily supply of milk from this particular shop, not that she herself ran the business in addition to her theatrical engagements. It was usually known as "The Thatched House"; two drawings of it by T. H. Shepherd, dated 1854, are in the Crace Collection, Brit. Mus. (portfolio xvii., nos. 57 and 58).

p. 124. *Constant court was paid to her for political purposes.*

The election of members for the borough of Southwark in the year 1681 was accompanied by great political excitement, and much light is thrown by the broadsides of the time on the sources of the strong feelings evoked on behalf of the successful candidates, Sir Richard How and Peter Ride on the one side, and on that of the disappointed aspirants, Edward Smith and Slingsby Bethel on the other. But of all this gossip one item alone will interest the general reader. We are informed that "the rumour of his [Slingsby Bethel] being married to Nell Gwyn did never obtain to his prejudice, and had ended with the poll, had he not afterwards taken so much pains at the Amsterdam Coffee-House to purge himself in that matter" (J. Eliot Hodgkin in *Notes and Queries*, 7th ser., ix. 207).

p. 124. *The Duke of Monmouth.*

In *Memoirs of the Verney Family* (iv. 265) we read under date Dec. 7, 1679: "Nelly dus the Duck of Monmouth all the kindness shee can, bot her interest is nothing." . . . "Nell Gwin begg'd hard of his Majtie to see him, telling him he was grown pale, wan, lean & long-visaged merely because he was in disfavour; but the

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King bid her be quiet for he w^d not see him." . . . "Sir Thomas Lee was on Saturday to visit Monmouth, but Nell Gwyn and Sir Stephen Fox being there before him, Sir Thomas could not see his Grace" (cf. also *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, 7th Report, pt. i. p. 478 *a*).

p. 124. "*Prince Perkin.*"

The story is told in *A Panegyric on Nelly* by Lord Rochester. Evelyn, it will be remembered, calls Monmouth "this Perkin" in his graphic account of the duke's last days.

p. 124. *Mrs. Barlow.*

During her career Monmouth's mother, Lucy Walter, seems to have adopted the alias of Mrs. Barlow, the name of a family with which the Walters of Pembrokeshire—from whence she came—had intermarried. She is said to have been born in 1630, the daughter of William Walter of Roch Castle, near Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, by Elizabeth, daughter of John Prothero and niece of John Vaughan, first Earl of Carbery. Colonel Algernon Sidney told James, Duke of York, that when in London in 1648 he had given fifty broad pieces for her, but having to join his regiment hastily, had missed his bargain. His brother, Colonel Robert Sidney, secured the prize for a time, but during the summer of 1648 the fair Lucy captivated Charles, Prince of Wales, then a youth of eighteen, who was at The Hague. Charles terminated his connection with her in Oct. 1651, and she died miserably at Paris in 1658.

p. 125. *Neat-Houses, near Chelsea.*

"There were," says Mr. Fèret, "neat-houses at Pimlico, near the riverside, and it may have been there that the mother of Nell Gwyn came by her death. On the other hand, the old Creek facing Sandford Manor House might have been the spot where the good lady fell in. It will be noticed that the writer says 'waterside,' which

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need not necessarily mean the Thames itself" (*Fulham, Old and New*, vol. ii. p. 273).

p. 126. *From these bills.*

These papers were calendared by Mr. Alfred J. Horwood in *Appendix to Third Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission* (p. 266) in 1872; they then belonged to the Rev. Francis Hopkinson, LL.D., of Malvern Wells, Worcestershire.

p. 126. *Side-boxes at the Duke's Theatre . . Nell paying for all.*

On the contrary it is probable that Nell treated her friends to the theatre at the cost of the country. Among the Exchequer documents in the *Third Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission* (Appendix, p. 266) are various bills against Nell Gwyn, including bills for places at the theatres. In September to December 1674 she saw *The Tempest* four times, *Macbeth* once, *Hamlet* once, and, in June 1675, *Lear* once. There are Treasury orders for payment to her. It would therefore seem that Nell made the Treasury pay for her boxes at the theatres to which she went as a spectator. (See Forneron's *Louise de Kéroualle*, Eng. trans. called *The Court of Charles II.*, ed. 1897, p. 84 *n.*

p. 130. *Nelly's household and other expenses.*

In the 3rd Report of the *Historical MSS. Commission* (p. 217*a*) there is a note of a letter of Dr. Henry Stubbes to the Earl of Kent, dated Sept. 28, 1673, in which he says that neither "Madame Kerwell's [Quérouaille's], nor the Duchess of Cleveland's, nor Nell Gwynne's warrants would be accepted." Charles was unable to lavish money on his favourites by reason of the Exchequer being closed in the preceding year.

In the 6th Report (pt. i. p. 473 *b*) we learn from a

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letter of Andrew Marvell, written in Dec. 1674, that £4000 a year was settled upon Nelly's two sons.

In the 9th Report we find that Nell Gwyn was paid out of the secret service funds, £1000 on Feb. 4, 1675, and £1500 on March 25 following (p. 450 *a*). At page 456 *b* is a reference to a grant of £16,000 to her; and at page 459 *a* is her receipt (dated Aug. 21, 1684) for £500 in part payment of a quarter of yearly allowance for and towards the maintenance of herself and Charles, Earl of Burford (now Duke of St. Albans).

In the British Museum is an account of money paid to her, 1676–9 (*Additional MS.* 28,094, f. 54), and a receipt for her allowance, 1681 (*Additional MS.* 21,553, f. 9).

Also in the Bodleian Library (872 *Rawlinson MS.*) are papers relating to grants of money on her account. Burnet (*Own Time*, Oxf. edit., i. 369, supplies the obvious commentary:—

"The Duke of Buckingham told me, that when she was first brought to the King, she asked only 500 pounds a year, and the King refused it. But when he told me this, about four years after, he said she had got of the King above sixty thousand pounds."

p. 131. *This was the erection of a Royal Hospital at Chelsea.*

The supposition—to which much of her popularity is due—that Nell Gwyn suggested the foundation of Chelsea Hospital is altogether baseless. It was Sir Stephen Fox, paymaster-general of the forces, who inspired Charles II. with the idea of the erection of a Royal Hospital "for emerited soldiers," and Fox gave munificently to the hospital, "as became him who had gotten so vast an estate by the soldiers." The facts connected with the history of the foundation are clearly set forth by Evelyn in his *Diary*, and he makes no reference to Nell Gwyn having had any concern in the matter.

p. 131. *The sign remains, but not the inscription.*

In Bull Inn Court, Strand (one of the innumerable

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localities so mysteriously "associated" with the jocular Nell), is a public-house with the sign of Nell Gwynne. Another house, bearing the same sign, is at 105 Pimlico Road. No. 541, King's Road, Fulham, is also the "Nell Gwynne," a comparatively modern house, which preserves the name of an older one which stood not far off. It was so named from the supposed association of Nelly with Sandford House, Fulham (Fèret, *Fulham, Old and New*, vol. ii. p. 85).

p. 132. *Duffet.*

Of Thomas Duffet there is some account in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

p. 132. *Whitcombe.*

As no copy of Whitcombe's book is in the British Museum or Bodleian, we append a full bibliographical note, together with the dedication.

Janua Divorum: | Or The | Lives and Histories | of | The { Heathen Gods, Goddesses, & Demi-Gods. } with Divine and Moral Obser vations upon | their most remarkable Actions, | Adorned with 25 Copper Cuts proper to each | Deity, and put into Verse. | By Robert Whitcombe. | Πάντες δε θεῶν κατέσ' ἄνθρωποι.—Hom. | London, | Printed for *Francis Kirkman*, and are to | be sold by most Booksellers, 1678.

Frontispiece. The Figures and Emblems of the Seaven Planets before the printed title as above.

A—K in eights.

The twenty-five (including frontispiece) crude copper cuts not reckoned in the signatures.

To The
Illustrious
Madam Ellen Guin.

Madam,

He who has so much arrogance as to make his Address to a Person of your Ladiships Eminence, ought

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also to have so much humility, as to acknowledg that he derives a greater honour from the *Dedication*, than he can expect from the *Composition*, of the most perfect Poem; your Favour is more creditable than Ingenuity it self, and an Author need not fear the harsh attaques of Time, and Oblivion, whose Works have the Honor to wear you in their Frontispiece. Next to the Ambition of being known to your Ladiship, this consideration was the greatest inducement that led me to this boldness; or as I think, I may rather term it Ambition, since the minutest of your incomparable Perfections could never make so swift an incursion into my thoughts, as not to find them sufficiently prepar'd with a Reverence and Adoration agreeable to so glorious a Reception. I knew that tho Curious Nature had extended her endeavors in the formation of your delicate Body, injoyn'd both it and every Limb about you to an exact Symitry, and pleasing Proportion: Tho she had been lavish of her Allurements in wantonly strewing them about your Wealthy Face, and to compleat the Fabrick, had enobled it with that brisk air and graceful meen, which certainly she has given you a Patent for, since none could ever acquire it but your Self, yet you could not be content with this her bounty, or think your Self perfect with the additional Blessings of Liberal Fate; you never rated your Self by your Grandure, or took the Dimentions of your worth as others do, by the gilded Coach, gaudie Retinue, and snorting Six — — These are trifles incident to the most empty Darlings of Impartial Fate. But you are more nobly attended with an illustrious Troop of Sublime Thoughts, and fair Idea's, which tacitly invading your Great Mind, fill it with that Satisfaction & Delight, which none but a Soul as large as your own, is capable to conceive.

It was this brave Elevation above the unthinking Croud, which induc'd me amongst the rest of your Admirers to think such extraordinary parts worthy of more than a common adoration, and therefore I have presum'd to bring the HEATHEN GODS to do you Homage; they lye prostrate at your feet, intreating

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your acceptance, and protest they shall live longer and happier under your Protection, in these poor Robes, than they can expect to do under any others, tho adorn'd with all the gayest Habilements of *Poesie*. I, conscious to their Infirmities, quarrelled at their Ambition for imploring so Judicious a Patroness; but they would hear of no denial: replying, that as you had Judgment, you had Candor likewise; and were more addicted to forgive than censure. *Apollo* told me, that in you only he should meet with his Primitive Wisdom. *Mercury* with his Pristine Wit. *Juno* with her old Soveraignty or greatness of Mind. *Venus* with her delicate beauty. And *Alcides* with his Godlike Courage and brave Spirit. And in short, they affirm'd, that all those Noble Qualifications for which they were formerly Deify'd, were only Concenter'd in your Self, and therefore humbly desired the Honor of your Patronage, tho Presented by so mean a Hand as that of

Madam,
Your most humble
and Devoted servant,
ROBERT WHITCOMBE.

Headline: *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

For the above information we are indebted to the kindness of Mr. G. Thorn Drury.

p. 134. *A garter . . . awaited the son of . . . the Duchess of Portsmouth.*

The Duke of Richmond, who was elected K.G., April 7, 1681, when nine years old. It is said that this pretty boy having accidentally placed the blue ribbon of the garter over his left shoulder, in lieu of round his neck (as hitherto), was the occasion of an order from the King that henceforth it should be so worn (Collins's *Peerage*, ed. Brydges, i. 206).

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p. 136. *This highly characteristic letter.*

Nell Gwyn was illiterate. Her letters are written by other hands, and signed (after a fashion) "E. G." by her. The letter in the text was shown by Dr. East Apthorp, vice-provost of Eton, to the Rev. William Cole, the well-known antiquary, Nov. 16, 1774; the description of the letter is that given by Cole, together with a copy of it, in one of his MSS. in the British Museum (now catalogued as *Additional MS.* 5847, f. 398). Horace Walpole's letter of thanks is dated Jan. 9, 1775. He wrote:—

"I every day intended to thank you for the copy of Nell Gwyn's letter, till it was too late; the gout came and made me moult my goose quill. The letter is very curious, and I am as well content as with the original" (*Letters*, ed. Cunningham, vi. 166).

"It is possible," writes our valued correspondent Mr. H. Lavers-Smith, "that the 'Madam Jennings' to whom the letter is addressed may be Mrs. Frances Jennings, the mother of the celebrated Frances and Sarah Jennings. She was certainly living at this date, since Steinman has found her will dated Feb. 12, 1691–2, proved Jan. 11, 1693–4 (registered in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 12, Box). The reference to 'your son Griffin' may be to Mrs. Jennings's son-in-law Edward Griffith, who married her third daughter, Barbara, as mentioned by Steinman in his *Althorp Memoirs* (1869), p. 50."

"Dear Lord Kildare," was John FitzGerald, 18th Earl of Kildare. He lived in St. James's Square, and in this very year (1684) married, as his second wife, Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Charles Jones, 1st Earl of Ranelagh ("a fortune of £10,000"). Her beautiful features are preserved to us in R. Williams's mezzotint engraving after one of Wissing's best portraits; she died in 1758 at the great age of 93 (Dasent's *History of St. James's Square*, p. 33). Either she, or one of her unmarried sisters was a mistress of Charles II., and the possessor of a kind heart, for in March 1680 this particular mistress "brought Monmouth to the King for reconciliation" (Henry Sidney's *Diary*, ed. Blencowe; *Notes and Queries*, 1st series, vol. i. p. 478).

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"My Ladie Williams" is undoubtedly the Lady Williams who was a near neighbour of Nelly's in St. James's Square, and a reputed mistress of the Duke of York. She was Susanna, daughter of Sir Thomas Skipwith, serjeant-at-law, knt. and bart. of Metheringham, co. Lincoln, and married in 1673 Sir John Williams, bart., of Marnhull, co. Dorset (he was born in 1642 and died in 1680). There is a whole-length portrait of her in free and easy attire by Wissing, which was engraved by Isaac Beckett. Lady Williams died in Sept. 1689 (Chester's *Registers of Westminster Abbey*, pp. 9, 224; Chaloner Smith's *British Mezzotinto Portraits*, pt. i. pp. 52–3; Dasent's *History of St. James's Square*, p. 34).

A letter to Laurence Hyde, second son of the great Earl of Clarendon, and afterwards Viscount Hyde and Earl of Rochester, was purchased by Sir William Tite at Samuel Weller Singer's sale, Aug. 3, 1858. It has been printed in the *Camden Miscellany* (vol. v.) and in *Notes and Queries* (4th ser., vii. 2). The letter, which appears to have been written in August 1678, when Hyde was envoy extraordinary to The Hague, is as follows:—

"pray Deare Mr. Hide forgive me for not writeing to you before now, for the reasone is I have bin sick thre months, & sinse I recoverd I have had nothing to intertaine you withall, nor have nothing now worth writing, but that I can holde no longer to let you know I never have ben in any companie wethout drinking your health, for I love you with all my soule. the pel mel is now to me a dismale plase sinse I have uterly lost S^r^ Car Scrope never to be recourd agane, for he tould me he could not live allwayes at this rate, & so begune to be a littel uncivil, which I could not sufer from an uglye *baux garscon*. M^s^ Knights Lady mothers dead, & she has put up a scutchin no beiger then my Lady grins scunchis [scuchins]. My lord Rochester is gon in the cuntrei. M^r^ Savil has got a misfortune, but is upon recovery & is to mary an hairres, who I thinke wont wont [sic] have an ill time ont if he holds up his thumb. My lord of Dorscit apiers wonse in thre munths, for he drinkes aile with Shadwell & M^r^ Haris at the Dukes house all day

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long. my Lord Burford remimbers his sarvis to you. my Lord Bauclaire is is [sic] goeing into france. we are a goeing to supe with the king at whithall & my lady Harvie. the King remembers his sarvis to you. now lets talke of state affairs, for we never caried things so cunningly as now, for we dont know whether we shall have pesce or war, but I am for war, and for no other reason but that you may come home. I have a thousand merry conseets, but I cant make her write um, & therefore you must take the will for the deed. god bye. Your most loueing obedunt faithfull & humbel sarvant,

"E. G."

Sir Carr Scrope, mentioned in the letter, was well known as a wit and a poet. Of Mrs. Knight's lady mother nothing is known. Lady Greene, when Miss Katherine Pegge, was one of Charles II.'s mistresses; her son by him was nicknamed "Don Carlos" (see *Hatton Correspondence*, Camd. Soc., vol. i. p. 96). John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, died in 1680; two years later his title was given to Hyde himself. Henry Savile, subsequently Vice-Chamberlain, did not marry the heiress. Thomas Shadwell became poet laureate at the Revolution in 1688 through the interest of Lord Dorset. Of Henry Harris, the actor, who posed as a rival to Betterton, and was a particular friend of Samuel Pepys, mention has been frequently made. Lady Harvey's husband, as ranger of Richmond Park, received the Countess of Castlemaine into his house during her quarrels with Charles II. The amiable Countess returned his kindness by inciting Mrs. Corey, the actress called by Pepys Doll Common, to "take off" Lady Harvey on the stage in the character of Sempronia in Ben Jonson's *Catiline*. Lady Harvey "procured people to hiss her and fling oranges at her, and, that being unsuccessful, procured the Lord Chamberlain to imprison her." Lady Castlemaine "made the King to release her," and much disturbance both in the theatre and at Court resulted.

Two letters written for Nell Gwyn are in the Evidence Chamber, Kilkenny Castle. By the courtesy of the

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Marquis of Ormonde we are enabled to print them from transcripts kindly made by Mr. C. Litton Falkiner :—

"My Lord

This is to beg a favour of your Grace, w^ch I hope you will stand my friend in—I lately gott a freind of mine to advance me on my Irish Pencōn halfe a year's Pay^mt for last Lady Day (w^ch all People have rec^ed but me) and I drew bills upon M^r Laurence Steele my Agent for ye Pay^mt of ye money, nott thinking but long before this ye bills had been paid : but contrary to my expectation I last night rec^d advice from him y^t ye bills are Protested. & he cannot receive any money without yo^r Grace's Positive order to ye Farmers for it.

"Your Grace formerly upon the King's Letter (w^ch this inclosed is the coppy of) was so much mine and Mrs. Forster's freind as to give necessary orders for our Pay^mts, notwithstanding the stop. I hope you will obleige me now, upon this request to give yo^r direcōns to ye Farmers ; y^t we may be paid our Arrears ; and what is growing due & you will obleige

My Lord

Your Grace's most humble
serv^t to command
ELLEN GWIN."

"Sept. 4^th 1682"

[Addressed]

"To His Grace James
Duke of Ormond Present"

[Endorsed]

"Madam Ellin Gwyn to his Grace 16^th Sept '82."

"My Lord

I hope yo^r Lords^hp will now obleige me so much as to stand my Freind. I have w^th much Importunity gott ye Lords of the Treā^ry to give an order to my Lord Ormond to cause the Arrears of my Pencōn stopt in Ireland to be paid what is due to me to Last Michās with

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my sisters Mrs. Forster & others whome their Letter mencõns: my Agent is Mr Laurence Steele to whom I have sent this letter to diliver to your Lordshp hoping for my sake you will be pleased to give him a speedy dispatch in this businesse & obleige your Lorshps most humble servant to command

ELLEN: GWIN"

"November 26
1682"

[Addressed] "To/
The Right Honble the Earle of Arran
psnt"

The Mrs. Forster referred to was Nelly's sister. Richard, Earl of Arran, to whom the second of these letters is addressed, was the fifth son of James, 1st Duke of Ormonde, and at the date of the letter was acting as deputy to his father, then lord lieutenant of Ireland, during his absence in England.

Two other letters attributed to her are addressed to James II. shortly after his accession in 1685. They originally formed part of the Melfort papers, and were purchased in 1856 for the British Museum, where they are catalogued as *Additional MS.* 21,483, ff. 27, 28. Both letters, which are unsigned, were printed in *Notes and Queries*, 4th ser., vi. 431. Owing to a writ of outlawry being out against her it was necessary for Nelly to see even the King secretly. The allusion in the second letter to what Charles II. intended doing for his mistress can only refer to her creation as Countess of Greenwich.

The letters are as follows:—

"Had I suferd for my God as I have don for yr brother and yu, I shuld not have needed ether of yr kindnes or justis to me. I beseecch you not to doe anything to the setling of my buisines till I speake wth you, and apoynt me by Mr Grahams wher I may speake with you privetly. God make you as happy as my soule prayes you may be, Yrs."

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"S^r, This world is not capable of giving me a greater joy and happynes than y^r Ma^ties favour, not as you are King and soe have it in y^r power to doe me good, having never loved y^r brother and y^r selfe upon that acount, but as to y^r persons. Had hee lived, hee tould me before hee dyed, that the world shuld see by what hee did for me that hee had both love and value for me, and that hee did not doe for me as my mad Lady Woster. Hee was my frind and alowed me to tell him all my grifes, and did like a frind advise me and tould me who was my frind and who was not. S^r the honour y^r Ma^tie has don me by M^r Grahams has given me great comfort, not by the present you sent me to releeve me out of the last extremety, but by the kind expressions hee made me from you of y^r kindnes to me, w^ch to me is above al things in this world, having, God knows, never loved y^r brother or y^r selfe interestedly. All you doe for me shall be yours, it being my resolution never to have any interest but y^rs, and as long as I live to serve you, and when I dye to dye praying for y^u."

p. 137. *The pious Ken.*

"The 23rd of the month of March, 1683, was a day much to be remembered in the history of Winchester. . . . The official known as the 'harbinger' . . . fixed on Ken's prebendal house for [Nell Gwyn]. It was probably assumed that one who had been recently appointed as a Court chaplain would be subservient after the manner of his kind. With Ken . . . it was quite otherwise. He met the message with an indignant refusal. 'A woman of ill-repute ought not to be endured in the house of a clergyman, least of all in that of the King's chaplain.' 'Not for his kingdom' would he comply with the King's demands. A local tradition relates that he took a practical way of settling the matter, by putting his house into the builder's hands for repairs and having it unroofed. Mrs. Eleanor Gwyn was, however, at last provided for. The Dean (Dr. Meggot) was found more compliant than the Prebendary. A room was built for her at the south end of the deanery, and was

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known familiarly by her name till it was destroyed by Dean Rennell, perhaps as perpetuating an unsavoury association, about 1835. . . . According to the current tradition of the time, Ken owed his advancement to that which, in the eyes of courtiers, would have seemed most likely to hinder it. When men were applying to him on behalf of this or that candidate, Charles is said to have stopped their representations with the declaration, 'Odds fish! who shall have Bath and Wells but the little black fellow who would not give poor Nelly a lodging?'" (Plumptre's *Life of Thomas Ken, D.D.*, I., 158, 178).

p. 140. *The testimony of Sir Thomas Millington.*

This interesting circumstance in the professional life of Sir Thomas Millington, M.D., is not mentioned by Munk (*Roll of College of Physicians*) or in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. He was born at Newbury, Berkshire, in 1628, and died Jan. 5, 1704. He was an original Fellow of the Royal Society, and received knighthood in 1680. He became physician to William and Mary, and occupied the same office under Queen Anne. In 1696 he was chosen president of the Royal College of Physicians. He is now chiefly remembered as the alleged discoverer of sexuality in plants.

p. 141. *The Duchess of Portsmouth, when in England, in* 1699.

This is doubtful. In 1697 she certainly received permission from Louis XIV. to visit London, but William III. forbade her landing. George Granville, Lord Lansdowne, says the duchess "only repeated what she had heard from others," and then proceeds to give his own opinion concerning Charles's mysteriously sudden end:—

"As to the poisoning part of the story, it was always my opinion, and not ill-grounded neither, that the King hastened his death by his own quackery. The last year of his life he had been much troubled with a sore leg which he endeavoured to conceal, and trusted too much

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to his own drugs and medicines. On a sudden the running stopt, and it was then he was seized with his apoplexy: a common case, fatal the moment those sort of sores dry up" (*A Letter*, etc., 1732, p. 14).

p. 145. *Peg Hughes the actress.*

On June 20, 1670, Grace, Lady Chaworth, in a letter to her brother, Lord Roos, at Belvoir Castle, says:—

"One of the K[ing's] servants hath killed Mr. Hues, Peg Hues' brother, servant to P[rince] Robert [Rupert] upon a dispute whether M^ris Nelly or she was the handsomer now att Windsor." (*Duke of Rutland's MSS.*, ii. 17.)

In the scandalous *Letters from the Dead to the Living* of the facetious Tom Brown and others, "N[e]ll G[wy]n" arraigns "P[e]g H[ug]hes" for having wasted over cards and dice the money she received from Prince Rupert. In the answer, which, like the attack, is, of course, imaginary, the charge is admitted.

p. 146. *Bestwood Park.*

Bestwood Park, which still belongs to the Duke of St. Albans, is described in an Inquisition in 1281 as "a park of our Lord the King wherein no man commons" (Cornelius Brown's *History of Nottinghamshire*, 1891, pp. 26, 27). Leases of land in Bestwood Park were granted to Nell Gwyn in 1681, as may be seen from *Additional Charters*, 15,862—15,864 in the British Museum.

p. 148. *The visits of Lower.*

Richard Lower, M.D. (born 1631, died 1691), on the death of Dr. Willis in 1675, "was esteemed," according to Wood, "the most noted physician in Westminster and London, and no man's name was more cried up at Court than his." His political sympathies, however, interfered with his professional success, for on the occasion of the "Titus Oates Plot" in 1678 (as Wood tells us), "he

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closed with the Whigs, supposing that party would carry all before them; but being mistaken, he lost much of his practice at and near the Court, and so consequently his credit." It was not, however, Lower who attended Nell Gwyn in her last illness: her physician was Christianus Harrell, M.D., one of the many doctors present at the deathbed of Charles II. Among the papers of Messrs. Child, the bankers (with whose firm, then Child and Rogers, Nelly banked), the following receipt was found in 1875:—

"Received by the hand of Mr. Child the summe of one hondert and nine pound yn full of all remedes and medecins delivered to M^is Ellin Gwyn deceased—I say received by me this 17 November 1688, CHRISTIANUS HARRELL, £109 . 00 . 00" (Munk's *Roll of College of Physicians*, 1878, i. 452; *Notes and Queries*, 9th ser., vi. 350).

p. 149. *She now made her will.*

This document, which is registered in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 164, Foot, has been compared with that in the text, and some mistakes corrected.

p. 150. *Thomas, Earl of Pembroke.*

The eighth earl (born 1656, died 1733). In his youthful days he drew his sword in support of Nelly, as recorded by Luttrell (Feb. 26, 1679–80): "Mrs. Ellen Gwyn being at the dukes playhouse was affronted by a person who came into the pitt and called her whore; whom Mr. Herbert, the earl of Pembrokes brother, vindicating, there were many swords drawn, and a great hubbub in the house" (*Brief Hist. Relation*, i. 34–5). He was afterwards president of the Royal Society (1689–90), and as a virtuoso and collector of what Pope called "statues, dirty gods, and coins" had a high reputation. To him Locke dedicated his famous *Essay*, "in token of gratitude for kind offices done in evil times" (Dasent, *History of St. James's Square*, p. 138 *sq.*).

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NOTES

p. 151. *Mrs. Rose Forster.*

Nell Gwyn's sister, who appears to have been twice married, first to John Cassells and secondly to one Forster. She is probably identical with the Rose Gwynne who in Dec. 1663 was imprisoned in Newgate. Her offence was robbery, but she possessed influence enough to gain a reprieve before judgment at the Old Bailey, and she was visited in prison by the King's favourite, the well-known Thomas Killigrew, and the Duke of York's cupbearer (Browne). On Dec. 26 she wrote to Browne begging him and Killigrew to obtain her release on bail "from this woeful place of torment until a pardon is pleaded." Her father, she adds, lost all he had in service of the late King, and it is hard she should perish in a gaol. A few days later (Dec. 30) she obtained her discharge (*Cal. State Papers*, Dom., 1663–4, pp. 390, 393). The mention of her father tallies with what is known concerning the father of Nell Gwyn.

Rose Gwyn's first husband is stated to have been John Cassells, another dilapidated "captain," who likewise expended his little all "in the service of the Crown," and died in 1675, leaving his widow penniless. "Charles II. gave her a pension of £200 a year," which she enjoyed until the accession of William and Mary. "Captain" John Cassells bears a suspicious resemblance to the highwayman and burglar of those names, who would be a suitable enough mate for Miss Rose Gwynne. He, too, could boast of his and his father's loyalty, and he certainly possessed a powerful friend at Court. Though by a proclamation of Dec. 23, 1667, or 1668, he was ordered to be apprehended and proceeded against with other disorderly persons, he obtained (Feb. 17, 1669) a warrant for his enlargement. In July following he attempted to rob the Lieutenant-Governor of Jersey while travelling through Warwickshire (*ibid.*, Dom., Oct. 1668—Dec. 1669, pp. 199, 215, 430, 438). He is next heard of in Sept. 1671, when he sent a delightfully impudent petition to the King, asking pardon for "being seduced to aid in the robbing of Sir Henry Littleton's house, his father having lost a plentiful estate in Ireland

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for his loyalty, and he having served under his Majesty s ensigns till the Restoration." Instead of being hanged he was granted a general pardon a few days later (*ibid.*, Dom., Jan.—Nov. 1671, pp. 495, 496).

p. 151. *To this, three months later, was added a codicil.*

Another codicil, which had escaped the observation of Peter Cunningham, is here appended; it was proved separately, and is registered in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 162, Exton :—

"The second Codicill of M^rs^ Ellen Gwinn deceased publiquely declared by her before divers credible witnesses after the makeing of her last Will and Testament and former Codicill according as it pronounced in and by the sentence given by the Right worshipfull Sir Richard Raines knight Doctor of Lawes and Master Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury the nineteenth day of July One Thousand and Six Hundred Eighty Eight in a Cause lately depending before him concerning the Proofe thereof followeth vizt. The said M^rs^ Ellen Gwinne did give and bequeath to M^rs^ Rose ffoster her sister the summe of two hundred pounds over and above the summe of two hundred pounds which shee gave to her the said Rose in her former Codicill. To M^r^ ffoster husband of the said Rose ffoster a ring of the value of forty pounds or forty pounds to buy him a ring. To Doctor Harrell (meaning Christianus Harrell Doctor of Physicke and one of her Physitians) twenty pounds. To M^r^ Derricke Nephew of the said Doctor Harrell tenn pounds. To Doctor Le ffebure (meaning Joshua Le ffebure Doctor of Physicke and the other of her Physitians) twenty pounds respectively to buy them rings. To Bridget Long whoe had beene her servant for divers yeares the summe of twenty pounds of lawfull money of England yearely dureing her naturall life. To M^rs^ Edling meaning Anne Edling a new gowne. And M^r^ John Warner her Chaplaine was present with others at the declareing thereof and that a little before the declareing of the same shee being of perfect mind and memory did order or desire the said

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Mr Warner to put into writeing what shee should then declare. And that the said Legacys were wrote and read to the deceased and by her approved and declared as parte of her last Will and Testament as by the proofes made and Sentence given in the said Cause doe appeare."

This codicil was proved on 7 December, 1688.

Joshua Le Febure, M.D., F.R.C.P., was one of the many physicians in attendance on Charles II. in his last illness.

p. 152. *Lady Fairborne.*

Dame Margery Fairborne. It is said that her maiden name was Devereux, and that she first married a Mr. Mansell, who must have died before 1666. She married, secondly, Sir Palmes Fairborne, Knt., Governor of Tangier, where he was slain, Oct. 24, 1680. He has an honorary monument in Westminster Abbey. She married, thirdly, at St. Marylebone, Middlesex, April 1, 1683, Jasper Paston, third son of Robert, first Earl of Yarmouth, whom she survived, being buried in Westminster Abbey, June 9, 1694.

p. 152. *She died . . . in November* 1687.

Nell Gwyn must have suffered acutely for many months before the end came. Writing on March 29, 1687, Sir Charles Lyttelton says: "Mrs. Nelly has bine dying of an apoplexie. She is now come to her sense on one side, for ye other is dead of a palsey. She is thought to be worth 100000li; 2000li in revenue, and ye rest jewells and plate" (*Hatton Correspondence*, Camd. Soc., vol. ii. pp. 66–67).

p. 153. *The bequest to the poor prisoners.*

So far as regards Whitecross Street Prison the dole had not ceased in 1850, when W. Hepworth Dixon published his book on *The London Prisons*.

In the 7th Report of the *Historical MSS. Commission* (App., p. 406 *a*) we are told that "Madame Gwin gave £100 towards the relief of the sufferers by the late dreadful fire which happened at Wapping Dec. 11, 1682."

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Other stories told of her generosity, such as the money left to the bell-ringers of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, lack confirmation.

p. 153 *n.* *Francis Gwynne, Esq.*

He was no connection of Nell Gwyn's, but the particular friend of Lord Rochester, one of Nelly's executors. In the *Wentworth Papers* (p. 163) occurs the sentence, "Frank Gwin, Lord Rotchester's gwine as they call him." He was son and heir of Edward Gwyn, of Llansannor, Glamorganshire, by Eleanor, youngest daughter of Sir Francis Popham, of Littlecote, Wilts, and was born at Combe Florey, Somerset, about 1648. From 1679 to 1685 he acted as clerk of the Privy Council, was a groom of the bedchamber to Charles II., and sat in parliament for many years. In Nov. 1688 he accompanied James II. on his expedition to the west, and his diary of the journey was printed by Mr. C. T. Gatty in the *Fortnightly Review* for Sept. 1886 (xlvi. 358–64). He died at his seat, Ford Abbey, Devonshire, June 2, 1734, aged eighty-six.

p. 156. *He died intestate.*

The Duchess of St. Albans took out letters of administration June 2, 1726, but the duke's will was found soon afterwards, and it was proved by her Aug. 25 following. It is remarkable that this document, dated July 19, 1694, shortly after his marriage, in which he left all his estate to his wife, was never altered or added to.

To the information in the text concerning him it may be added that he was created, Dec. 27, 1676, Baron Headington and Earl of Burford, both in co. Oxford, and Jan. 10, 1683–4, Duke of St. Albans. He was, according to Evelyn, in 1684, "a very pretty boy," though Macky in 1704 calls him "of a black complexion," and "very like King Charles." He adds that "he is a gentleman every way *de bon naturel*, well bred, doth not love business, is well affected to the constitution

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of his country." He died May 10, 1726, at Bath, and was buried on the 20th in Westminster Abbey. On April 13, 1694, he married Lady Diana de Vere, eldest daughter and eventually sole heiress of Aubrey, twentieth and last Earl of Oxford of the name, who survived him, and died Jan. 15, 1741–2. For a short time he lived at No. 5 St. James's Square, a house which had been previously occupied by another of Charles's many natural sons, Charles, Duke of Richmond (Dasent's *Hist. of St. James's Square*, p. 101 *n.*). The duke's house in Old Bond Street, London, was advertised for sale in the *London Gazette* for June 27, 1727.

The *Genealogical Magazine* for Jan. 1901 contains a list of three hundred and eleven persons then living who are descended from Nell Gwyn. The list includes many names of notable persons among the peerage, the baronetage, and the commonalty, and, with its accompanying note, is a curious and interesting one.

p. 156. *There are many portraits of Nell Gwyn.*

A portrait by Lely at Windsor, with a landscape background of that place, was long called Nell Gwyn; it was in reality a picture of James II.'s queen, Mary of Modena. At Burton Hall another Lely, representing a lovely girl "with a *particularly innocent* expression of face," passed for a portrait of Nelly, and the belief was so strong that the then Duke of St. Albans offered to purchase it. A duplicate was at Waldershare, where it was known as Lady Lewisham, who afterwards married Francis, Lord North; and two other duplicates were at Lees Court and Rockingham Castle. At length, through the patient research of Lord Monson, the portrait was discovered to be that of Lady Arabella Wentworth, daughter of the celebrated Earl of Strafford and sister of Ann, Lady Rockingham, whose descendants were to be found in each of these four mansions (Lord Monson in *Notes and Queries*, 2nd ser., v. 137). Lord Rosebery also possesses a Lely, but to judge from the Goupil reproduction (1901) it is not much like, and its pedigree

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appears to be unknown. Then there is the Lely known to us by the charming mezzotint of Valentine Green, in which Nelly is seated half naked. There is still another Lely to be mentioned—that of a decidedly *embonpoint* young lady sitting on a bank and holding some grass to a lamb; it has been finely mezzotinted by McArdell, but it resembles neither Nelly nor Miss Elizabeth Hamilton (afterwards the Comtesse de Grammont), under whose name it is sometimes catalogued.

Another Lely, with the royal favourite in a white and brown dress and a lamb, sold for £283 10*s.* in May 1902; it had realized £65 2*s.* only in 1864 (Slater's *Art Sales of* 1902, no. 2806).

At Stevens' Auction Rooms on Feb. 26, 1901, a reputed portrait of Nell Gwyn was offered for sale, but not reaching the reserve price was returned to the owner. It is thus enigmatically described in the catalogue:

"Miniature Portrait of Nell Gwynn on copper with original case and 30 cover dresses on talc, handed down since Charles forced Parliament to pay off the mortgage held by Clayton on her farm, when this portrait and a jewel-case were left in possession of the present owner's family; this is probably the identical portrait carried by the King in his pocket."

An interesting illustrated article on it, called "Nell Gwynne's Various Guises," appeared in the *Lady's Pictorial* for March 23 of the same year, p. 470, over the initials "W. M. W." (to which our attention was drawn by Mr. H. Lavers-Smith).

"Accompanying the miniature," writes W. M. W., "are some thirty mica covers in different stages of preservation, upon which various head-dresses and costumes are painted. The place where in the ordinary course the face would come is in all cases left blank, the talc being of course transparent, when it is laid upon the original miniature the countenance of the latter becomes visible, and we are enabled to see Nell Gwynne as she would appear in various characters."

The portrait is far more likely to be that of Mrs. Anne Gwyn, Gwin, Quin, or Quyn—(the name is variously

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spelt)—the actress so constantly confounded with Nell Gwyn, as she is known to have acted the parts represented by the masks figured in the *Lady's Pictorial*. "In conclusion," says W. M. W., "one might allude to the burial-place of 'poor Nelly,' who lies under a substantial obelisk in Lord Rothschild's park at Tring in Hertfordshire." Naturally startled by this statement, we made application to the "Estate Office, Tring Park," to be informed "that there is a monument in Tring Park, but it is perfectly certain Nell Gwyn is not buried there, and there is no inscription you can make out." Nevertheless, one would like to know the meaning of the monument. The historians of the county, Clutterbuck and Cussans, do not even mention it.

p. 158. *Early engravings from her portraits.*

The following rare engravings of Nell Gwyn were sold at Chaloner Smith's sale in 1888: (1) by Pierce Tempest, one other known, £22 10*s*.; (2) as Cupid, by Richard Tompson, 1st state, believed to be unique, not mentioned by Granger or Bromley, £23; (3) by the same engraver, with her two sons, £32 (another impression in April 1901, £17 10*s*.); (4) by Henri Gascar, with her sons, £20 10*s*.; (5) by an unknown engraver (after Lely), £20 10*s*. (and £20 in April 1901); it is described in Chaloner Smith's *British Mezzotinto Portraits*, pt. iv., div. i., p. 1657, No. 49.

In April 1901, a fine 1st state of the well-known engraving by Valck after Lely, depicting her caressing a lamb, fetched £30. (Slater, *ut supr.*, 1901, No. 1450.)

At the bottom of the Valck engraving is inscribed:

"The Sculpter part is done the features hitt
of Madam Gwin, No Arte can shew her Witt."

An impression of the engraving after Gascar of Nelly in the famous chemise (said to be by Masson) fetched £20 5*s*. at Sotheby's on April 16, 1901.

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p. 159. *Relics of Nelly.*

Another looking-glass, said to have belonged to her, now adorns the visitors' drawing-room of the Army and Navy Club, which is partly built on the site of Nelly's first house in Pall Mall.

p. 161. *Oliver Cromwell's Porter.*

This man is said by Granger (*Biog. Hist.*, 2nd edit., vol. iv. p. 210) to have been of great height, as appears by his standard on back of the terrace at Windsor; he studied works on mystical divinity, preached, and prophesied; but his enthusiasm turned his brain, and he spent many years under restraint. There is a rare, if not unique, portrait of him in the Print Room, British Museum; the engraver is unknown. The reputed portrait of him in Pierce Tempest's *Cryes of the City of London* (No. 71, "Un insense pour la Religion") is not that of a tall man.

p. 162. *Granger's sentence.*

The reference is to Granger's *Biographical History of England*, iv. 188, where it is said of Nell Gwyn: "She continued to hang on her cloaths with her usual negligence when she was the King's mistress, but whatever she did became her."

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